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Blow for farmers and fishermen

Brussels hits back against British veto

By Philip Webster, Peter Riddell and Michael Dynes

EUROPE launched a fierce counter-attack yesterday against Britain's blocking tactics in the beef war.

After Jacques Santer, the president of the European Commission, accused John Major of "hostage-taking" in his policy of non-cooperation, Brussels announced three measures that angered Euro-sceptics:

- Compensation to farmers for falling beef prices, which hands more cash to German and French farmers than to British farmers whose herds have been most affected.
- Second, Emma Bonino, the Fisheries Commissioner, said that Britain's fishing fleet, along with other EU fleets, must be reduced by 40 per cent, over and above cuts that have already proved too difficult to achieve.
- Third, the Commission demanded that Britain must, by today, give it details of the baby milk brands at the centre of the latest domestic health scare. Ministers have so far refused to divulge the brands at home.

The announcements, clearly designed to show the Government that the European Union

has no intention of bowing to the Prime Minister's headline campaign, came as Kenneth Clarke, the Cabinet's leading pro-European, voiced hopes that the confrontation would be over before next month's EU summit in Florence. The Chancellor of the Exchequer also rejected Tory Euro-sceptics' demands for a specific timetable for lifting the ban on British beef.

In an interview with *The Times*, the Chancellor said: "We would prefer to sort it out before the Florence summit. If it is going on then, it will have to be sorted out at Florence."

"If we get absolutely no response from the other European countries it is likely to go on indefinitely. I do not think this is likely. The process of blocking all this legislation is going to concentrate minds."

Mr Santer's unprecedented attack, which bore all the hallmarks of his predecessor Jacques Delors, came as Ms Bonino announced the plan to reduce the Union's fleets to preserve fishing stocks that are in imminent danger of being "fished to extinction".

The Commission's proposed compensation package for

falling beef prices means British farmers will receive £13 million out of a fund of about £52 million. However, the figure, which is based on total numbers of cattle, will give French producers £23.2 million and the Germans £15.4 million.

The package of measures provoked the fury of Conservative Euro-sceptics last night. John Redwood, last year's party leadership contender, described the fishing move as "a devastating hammer blow to an already devastated industry".

He added: "British fishermen are being asked to scrap their boats and to sacrifice their jobs, to stand on the quayside and watch Spanish vessels catch the fish."

Mr Redwood urged the Prime Minister to step up the conflict with the Union by reimposing a 200-mile fishing limit round Britain unless fishermen are given a better deal.

The "war cabinet" of Mr Major, Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, and Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Secretary, were away from London. However, Roger Freeman, the Public Service Minister, who is leading the Cabinet's technical response, said of Mr Santer's reaction: "We are approaching this in a calm and rational fashion. We hope the rest of Europe will do the same."

The force of Mr Santer's outburst, delivered at a private meeting of his commissioners and deliberately disclosed, surprised the Government.

Mr Santer's spokesman said after the meeting: "He deplores the taking hostage of dossiers in the Council which has nothing to do with BSE. Such actions have no place in the Community governed by the rule of law." Although he said there were no plans for legal action at present, with Britain challenging the worldwide beef-ban in the European Court, there is a clear, longer-term threat of a legal tit-for-tat.

The Commission president also claimed that Britain's attitude would "not fail to be counter-productive".

Mr Santer emphasised that it was up to Britain to put its house in order: "The main responsibility rests with the UK authorities, which must make proposals, apply them, and monitor them effectively in order to eradicate BSE. These measures are the only way in which we can re-establish consumer confidence and stabilise the markets," he said.

Clarke interview, page 2
Letters, page 21

Beef fails to turn the tide for Major

By Peter Riddell

THE Tories and John Major have failed to reap any immediate electoral benefit from the beef confrontation with the European Union, a MORI poll for *The Times* reveals.

Support for the Tories has fallen over the past month. It stands at 27 per cent, down one point on the end of April, while public satisfaction with the performance of the Government and Mr Major have declined. Labour is unchanged at 54 per cent, with the Liberal Democrats one point up at 15 per cent.

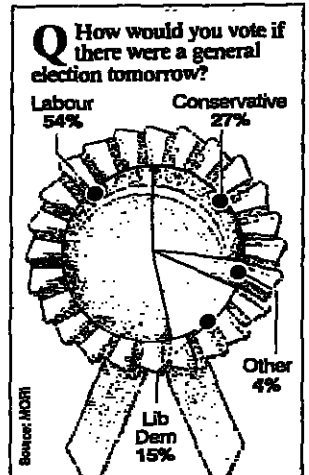
The poll, undertaken last weekend, is contrary to the expectations of most MPs and party strategists. It will dash the hopes of Tory leaders that Mr Major's tough line of non-cooperation with Brussels would boost the party's standing as he is portrayed as a strong and patriotic leader.

Labour advisers were also apprehensive that the party's ratings might suffer from the beef confrontation and from recent reports about Shadow Cabinet disagreements. The poll may reinforce misgivings among Tory MPs about the wisdom of the confrontation

policy, with rumblings of dissent already evident among pro-European Tories and sceptics.

Even Tory supporters have not been impressed, the poll shows. Their satisfaction with the way Mr Major is doing his job as Prime Minister has declined from 68 to 63 per cent since the end of April. His overall approval rating - Continued on page 2, col 6

Clarke interview, page 2
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The Prince and Princess of Wales embrace as they leave Eton yesterday after they had made a rare public appearance together at the school's speech day. The couple joined Prince William for lunch, but left before the traditional procession of boats



"Paul Gascoigne is on board. You may experience some turbulence"

Quest for peace
The Duchess of York will begin a quest to find "inner peace" in her new life after her divorce is made absolute today. She said in a television interview that she intended to turn over a "fresh, clean page" in her life.

Extra beds
The Health Secretary has ordered 55 more extra intensive care beds for critically ill children to try to stem complaints that hospitals are turning youngsters away. Health authorities must find the money.

Peres clings to tiny lead in Israeli poll

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

EARLY exit polls from the Israeli elections last night showed Shimon Peres, the incumbent Prime Minister, leading by a narrow margin.

Polls conducted by two separate Israeli television stations gave Mr Peres a lead of between 1-5 per cent over Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of the rival Likud party. In the race for the 120-seat Knesset, Labour was predicted to win more than 35 seats and Likud more than 30. The pro-Labour Meretz party was in third place with ten seats.

In what was predicted to be an 80 per cent turnout - higher than in 1992 - the big surprise was the apparent gains made by three main religious parties who are tipped to win 20 seats, an increase of at least four.

The Israeli Arabs, who form 12-15 per cent of the electorate of 3.9 million, could hold the balance of power. Many extreme right-wing Jews have vowed non-cooperation with a government dependent on Arab support.

While some Arabs claimed

to have been motivated to support Mr Peres by recent blatantly racist slogans used by ultra-orthodox Jews backing Likud, others said that the recent assault on Lebanon was still too potent to allow them to vote for him.

Under the new electoral system, the candidate elected with over 50 per cent of the total poll has 45 days to select a government able to command confidence in the Knesset.

Death threats against Mr Peres from right-wing Jewish extremists opposed to his conciliatory policies towards the Arabs overshadowed voting yesterday.

Mr Peres was forced to scrap an afternoon tour of polling booths after callers said that he would be assassinated "within the next few hours".

Security officials said a loaded rifle had been found close to Labour Party election headquarters in Tel Aviv.

Earlier Mr Peres voted in a Tel Aviv suburb surrounded by a phalanx of nervous bodyguards.

Teacher tells of screams as Dunblane gunman fired

By Stephen Farrell and Gillian Bowditch

TWO teachers yesterday told the first day of the inquiry into the Dunblane massacre of the moments when Thomas Hamilton opened fire on the class of five- and six-year-olds and their teacher Gwen Mayor.

Mary Blake, herself wounded when Hamilton fired 105 bullets around the primary school gymnasium, told the inquiry headed by Lord Cullen: "I can remember the children shouting. It was so loud that the screams seemed to be inside my head. We felt so hopeless because we could do nothing for the children."

Both she and Eileen Harrild, a physical education teacher who suffered chest and arm wounds, praised the terrified children for staying "amazingly calm" as they cowered in a corner of the gymnasium moaning from their wounds. One child kept repeating "What a bad man," said Mrs Harrild. "We just put our fingers to our lips and the children were very quiet. They didn't want him to come back again."

they heard how Hamilton opened fire on the class on March 13 in which 16 children and a teacher died.

The inquiry is being held at the Albert Hall, Stirling, five miles from Dunblane.

The most chilling moment of the day was when a picture of Thomas Hamilton's dead body lying on the gymnasium floor was flashed up on a dozen television screens around the hall. Families of the dead and injured, who had arrived flanked by social workers and police, grimaced



Harrild: injured too badly to help class

at the sight of his corpse surrounded by the guns he used. The evidence was too much for some parents, who were helped out of the hall by counsellors. However most stayed throughout, sitting stony faced in a gallery removed from the press and public seats.

Two hundred seats had been made available for members of the public behind them but few were full. The people of Stirling are acutely aware of the suffering of their neighbours.

Inquiry, pages 8 and 9

George Washington draft found in Suffolk

By Alan Hamilton and John Vincent



Washington, America's first President, and part of his undelivered inaugural speech

THE Library of Congress in Washington emerged last night as a likely bidder for an important early American document found under a sofa in a Suffolk country house.

Book experts at Phillips, the London auctioneers, are satisfied that the single sheet of paper, with handwriting on both sides, is the work of George Washington and is a missing fragment of his original

And in the people of America... Washington's notes were found during a routine probate valuation of books at a house in Aldeburgh, Suffolk, after the recent death of a descendant of Sir Thomas Lyell, a prominent English geologist who visited America in the 1840s and is thought to have been given pages of Washington's script as a souvenir. Simon Roberts, the

New World is now becoming a stage for wonderful exhibitions," he wrote.

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The Times on the Internet
<http://www.the-times.co.uk>



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Clarke snubs Tory Right on beef and taxes

Kenneth Clarke, refusing to give way to the Tories' "excitable backbenchers", yesterday told Peter Riddell and Janet Bush of his determination to be tough on the economy and tender toward Europe

AN UNRUFFLED Kenneth Clarke delivered a double rebuff to Tory rightwingers yesterday, refusing to promise tax cuts or to sign up for a long beef war with Europe. If he has his way, there will be no early general election — certainly not one about beef — and no early Budget.

Talking to *The Times* yesterday in his Treasury office, Mr Clarke was his usual relaxed self, chatting about his visit to Northampton to watch cricket on Tuesday and apparently unfettered by the beef row or by the taunts of his Euro-sceptic critics. For him the beef ban, while fully justified, is a negotiating tactic and should not develop into a wider European battle.

The Chancellor's views are at odds with those critics over the conditions for ending non-cooperation with the European Union, over their calls for "repatriation" of powers from Brussels and on expectations of tax cuts in the autumn.

The cost of the beef crisis and a shortfall in tax revenues, he says, mean that the warring noises he made early about the Budget were not tactical. "They were not made with a nod and a wink to my more right-wing, excitable backbenchers, saying that, actually, I am going to give enormous tax cuts but I want to lower expectations."

"I was trying to get into the public debate as quickly as possible that this year is a very tight year on fiscal policy."

Mr Clarke describes as "gimmicky" recent suggestions about bringing forward the Budget from the end of November to allow a general election at the end of this year. "I have not even contemplated bringing it forward, nor has it been suggested to me that I should. It is a mythical discussion."

"You would have to have

very good reasons other than an election. I think to do it for an election is just gimmicky. It runs the risk of making the Budget less credible."

European policy, he says, has been fixed in the Government's White Paper and is "not going to change before the next election, on a single currency, a referendum, on all the key issues". He strongly defends last week's non-cooperation decision, which he describes as "a perfectly legitimate European tactic". The Prime Minister and he worked out the position together before it was announced.

Britain, he says, is not trying to paralyse the work of the EU because that "would be to the great disadvantage of Britain". There will be no effect on the work on a single currency, which does not require decisions for a considerable time. "EMU is one of the areas of policy least affected."

Mr Clarke is careful to stress that the Government has "never specified the need for a timetable with dates on". What is needed is agreement on a series of steps, so that Britain can be reassured that "what we're doing in good faith will lead other countries to lift the ban when we've done it".

The tactic has precedents. Mr Clarke remembers Lamberto Diini of Italy blocking the financial deal agreed at the Edinburgh summit over the issue of Italian milk quotas. "Lamberto was not being apologetic. He did exactly the same thing at several Ecofin [finance ministers] meetings I attended and faced strong complaints from some of his colleagues."

Mr Clarke hopes the tactic will be lifted before the Florence summit of European heads of government next month. "If we get absolutely



Mr Clarke yesterday, relaxed but defying Euro-sceptics over the BSE crisis: "We cannot have these people ratchet it up for wider motives"

no response from the other European countries, it's likely to go on indefinitely. I don't think this is likely. The process of locking up all this legislation is going to concentrate minds."

He is dismissive of attempts by the sceptics to broaden the argument with the rest of Europe. "We cannot have these people ratchet it up for other wider motives which are inconsistent with the Government's wider policy. We're not seeking repatriation [of powers from Brussels]."

Mr Clarke does not talk as if he is isolated. "I think there is a large number of my party who agree with my position on Europe."

The beef crisis means that a big chunk — more than £1 billion — of this year's public spending contingency reserve

has already been earmarked. That and the shortfall in tax revenues, he acknowledges, means that he faces problems on both sides of the Government's balance sheet.

Mr Clarke says that his first priority is to get borrowing down to achieve a balanced budget in the medium term. He expresses concern that this target has already slipped back by 12 months last year. "I certainly don't intend to have a target which keeps moving off into the medium-term distance and is never reached."

Some Conservative backbenchers have privately argued that not only would large tax cuts give the Government its best chance of winning the election, but that even if it were to lose, the cuts could leave Labour with a fiscal poisoned pill. Mr Clarke ro-

bustly rejects such a game plan. "People who argue that we are not going to win the election. It is a defeatist argument. I do not believe we have lost the next election."

"I do not wish to find the party in office dealing with things that it had not told the public about which caused us to go back on what we have been doing. I propose to leave the economy in the healthiest state we can manage, and the public finances in the healthiest state we can manage, so that we can deliver what we promise at the next election."

His party's election success did not depend on tax cuts in November. "Our best card at the next election is that we have run the economy very successfully so that people are now getting better off and

unemployment is falling, and we will argue to people that we are going to carry on doing that so that they will get even better off and unemployment will fall further as long as they re-elect a Conservative Government."

The Chancellor took a hard line on public spending. His target of getting it down to 40 per cent of gross domestic product is proving to be eye-wateringly tough, he says, and he gave a warning that the public-spending round about to begin would be even more ferocious than in the past few years.

"The background to this year's spending round is plainly a year when discretionary bids of one kind or another are going to be very hard to entertain. By and large, colleagues should ap-

preciate there's no room for them and some people are going to have to make reductions."

The twin concerns of the economy and Europe come together in suggestions that his position is becoming like that of Roy Jenkins leading the minority of Labour pro-Europeans in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Although admitting that "I do agree with Roy on some things on Europe", Mr Clarke is amused by the comparison. "Roy Jenkins was a passable Chancellor. I'd like to be better. Of all the Labour Chancellors I can remember, I think Roy was the best — I'll go that far in praising an erstwhile political opponent."

Leading article and Letters, page 21

Tories must open books says Prescott

John Prescott accused the Tories yesterday of filling party coffers with money from "illegal, immoral and illicit" sources. Amid growing allegations that businessmen with links to the Bosnian Serb leadership have contributed to Tory funds, the deputy leader told a seafarers' conference in Dublin: "Not a day goes by without new revelations about the dodgy funding of the Conservative party. The case for the Tory party to open their books and reveal the sources of their income is now unanswerable."

Mr Prescott said that funds from the fugitive businessman Asil Nadir had been shown to be illegal. The Tories, he added, were now "in hock" to secretive foreign businessmen.

Camera clue

Robbers who killed a German tourist may have been captured on closed-circuit television. Johanna Czardobon, 56, was shot as she sat drinking coffee with her husband in a Bedford hotel on Tuesday. Detectives are hoping that a security system covering the town centre may have recorded the pair entering or leaving the hotel.

Jury still out

The jury in the retrial of Sara Thornton, accused of murdering her husband Malcolm, retired last night without reaching a verdict after four hours' deliberation. The eight men and four women will resume their deliberations today at Oxford Crown Court. Thornton has already served five years in jail for the killing.

Parole issue

The Parole Board has criticised the Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, over his plan to abolish discretionary parole for prisoners serving more than four years and to replace it with a system under which they earn early release by good behaviour. The board described the change as "a serious and potentially dangerous mistake".

Nurse struck off

A district nurse who falsified records of home visits, describing as "cheerful" a woman who had died two months before, was struck off the register of the UK Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting, Margaret Evans, 64, has been sacked by Shropshire health authority and did not attend the hearing in London.

Bosun drowned

The bosun of the Oxford University Yacht Club drowned during a punting trip on the River Cherwell after suffering an epileptic fit, an inquest in Oxford was told yesterday. Stephen Royle, 35, a mature student at Manchester College, passed out after the fit and fell into the water. Verdict: accident.

Greenbaum dies

Professor Sidney Greenbaum, a leading authority on the English language, collapsed and died on Tuesday while lecturing at Moscow State University. Professor Greenbaum, formerly Quaker Professor of English Language and Literature at University College London and director of the Survey of the English Language, was 59.

Etonian charged

An old Etonian appeared in court in Reading yesterday on charges of intending to supply drugs to pupils at the public school. Thomas Seidler, 19, a student at Warwick University, faces three charges of possessing with intent to supply and four further charges of possessing drugs. The case was adjourned until July.

Fishermen reject Brussels plan for fleet cut

FROM MICHAEL DYNES IN BRUSSELS AND MICHAEL HORNSBY

BRITISH fishermen last night rejected proposals from Brussels for a 40 per cent cut in the size of European Union fishing fleets over the next six years. They said the cuts would destroy the livelihoods of coastal communities.

Britain's fleet was already struggling to survive, they said, in the face of reduced catch quotas and competition from flag-of-convenience Spanish and Dutch boats. Any further cutbacks would put smaller ports out of business.

Announcing the proposed

cutback in Brussels yesterday Emma Bonino, the EU Fisheries Commissioner, said she had no option but to set new targets for reducing EU trawler fleets if the European fishing industry was to survive into the next century. "Too much fishing will kill off all the fish," she said.

Britain faces the prospect of an even bigger fleet cutback than other member states because, according to the European Commission, it is about 15 per cent behind on meeting its reduction targets under the current four-year boat decommissioning programme, which runs to the end of this year. The British

fishing fleet is estimated by Brussels to stand at 247,198 gross tonnes, still far above the agreed target of 212,974 tonnes for 1995 and the even lower level of 209,370 tonnes Britain is required to reach by the end of this year. The 40 per cent cut would apply to the tonnage Britain is supposed to have attained.

Glenn Quelch, of the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations, said: "The Government must fiercely resist these proposals. What the Commission never acknowledges is that 20 per cent of British fleet tonnage is accounted for by quota-hopping foreign boats. If they were

removed we would be comfortably within our targets."

Malcolm Cooke, chairman of the South West Fish Producers' Organisation in Brixham, Devon's main fishing port, said: "My reaction is one of horror. We still have 15 per cent of the previous cutback to meet, so the Commission is effectively proposing a halving of the British fleet."

Spain has threatened to retaliate against British initiatives in Europe after Britain's decision — as part of the campaign of non-cooperation in the face of the EU ban on British beef — to block the progress of a free trade accord between the EU and Mexico.



Bonino said fish could die out from overfishing

Tory popularity down

Continued from page 1 measuring those satisfied or less dissatisfied — has dropped from minus 33 points to minus 40 among the public as a whole. Net satisfaction with the Government's performance has dropped from minus 60 to minus 64. Tony Blair's net approval rating has slipped slightly from 22 points to 19.

These findings will reinforce the Conservative leadership's caution about calling an early election. Talking ahead of the poll, Mr Clarke told *The Times* that he did not favour an early election. He argued that the Tories' best card was to argue that people would get even better off and unemploy-

ment would fall further so long as they re-elected a Conservative government. "This particular card will get stronger the longer this Parliament runs because with every month I expect to see the real economy getting stronger."

The idea of bringing the Budget forward to permit an early election was, he said, "just gimmicky".

MORI interviewed 1,620 adults at 157 sampling points between May 23 and 26. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (10 per cent), are undecided (7 per cent) or who refuse to say (2 per cent).

Leading article, page 21

Labour to target reading ability

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

LABOUR will turn its back on progressive teaching methods today with proposals to bring all children up to their expected reading age before they start secondary school. One option will be to hold pupils back in primary schools until they have reached the required standard.

In a speech to head teachers, David Blunkett, the Shadow Education and Employment Secretary, will throw his weight behind whole-class teaching, grouping by ability, and phonics — the traditional method of learning to read by sounding out letters.

He is to offer parents yearly progress reports and promise a new emphasis on the three Rs under Labour. Mr Blunkett has set a target of the end of a second term in government for all 11-year-olds to reach their chronological reading age, other than those with special needs. A literacy taskforce, chaired by Professor Michael

Barber, dean of new initiatives at London University's Institute of Education, will advise Labour on how to achieve this. Measures will include an increased role for parents supporting teachers and an overhaul of teacher training courses.

Mr Blunkett's speech, at the annual conference of the National Association of Head Teachers in Torquay, is expected to single out Labour authorities such as Nottinghamshire, where primary schools place children in ability sets, and the East London borough of Barking and Dagenham, which has encouraged whole-class teaching.

Labour will stop short of promising an immediate review of the national curriculum in primary schools. But party leaders want the first two years of school to be devoted mainly to reading, writing and numeracy, together with interpersonal skills.

Defence chiefs fear pensions shake-up

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

FIVE former chiefs of the defence staff have spoken out against a proposed pension scheme for the Armed Forces, which they fear could lead to cuts and injustice for thousands of service widows.

The scheme is due to be announced in the summer, as part of a much-delayed response to a study by Sir Michael Bett, former deputy chairman of BT, published in March last year.

A call for the new system to remedy current injustices is made in a letter to *The Times* today from Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton, Field Marshal Lord Carver, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin, Field Marshal Lord Bramall and Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Craig of Radley.

They are eager for change to a rule under which pensions for servicemen who retired before 1978 cannot be passed on to their widows if they married after retirement. This

regulation is believed to affect a growing number of widows and, if abolished, would cost the Ministry of Defence an extra £60 million.

Sir Michael's report, *Managing People in Tomorrow's Armed Forces*, included a number of pension improvements which would cost an extra £40 million a year. These would be offset, however, by his recommendation that pensions should be paid only from the age of 50. Currently ex-servicemen can receive partial pensions from their late 30s.

This recommendation, which is expected to be adopted, has been fiercely opposed by the services. Major-General Peter Bonnet, general secretary of the Officers' Pension Society, which campaigns for all of the 39,000 service pensioners and their dependants, said it would save the MoD at least £200 million.

Letters, page 21

Draft of speech by Washington found in Suffolk

Continued from page 1 valuer from Phillips, was being shown round the house when the gardener who was with him noticed an album protruding from under a sofa.

"I pulled it out, expecting to find family photos. When I saw the piece by Washington in his own hand, I knew I had found something important. It is by far the most valuable find of my life," Mr Roberts said yesterday.

Phillips expect the document to fetch about £150,000 at auction in London on June 13, but interest from America could drive the price much higher. James Hutson, keeper of manuscripts at the Library of Congress in Washington, said last night

that 13 other leaves from Washington's draft speech, which originally contained 62 pages, had come to light over the past 200 years. Most of them, however, were in private hands. "The Library of Congress has no originals, only photocopies, we would be most interested in this document, provided we are satisfied it is genuine," Mr Hutson said. The museum in Washington's home at Mount Vernon also has no original pages of the draft speech.

Felix Pryor, head of the book department at Phillips, said last night that he was convinced of the document's authenticity. "I have compared the handwriting with known Wash-

ington texts, and it matches. I have read the previous page of the manuscript, which is known and has been published, and the text runs on. And I am satisfied as to its provenance, given the family in whose possession it was found," Mr Pryor said.

In his original, undelivered address, Washington rejects the possibility that Americans would prove incapable of governing themselves, or would ever again consent to having external government imposed on them as they had under George III.

But, he goes on, "until the people of America shall have lost all virtue; until they shall have become totally insensible to the difference between freedom

and slavery; until they shall have been reduced to such poverty of spirit as to be willing to sell that pre-eminent blessing, the birthright of a Freeman, for a mess of pottage in short, until they shall have been found incapable of governing themselves and ripe for a Master — those consequences, I think, can never arrive."

Later, he writes: "Happily our citizens are remarkably instructed by education, docile to duty, and ingenious for making improvements. I believe that more knowledge is, at this moment, diffused among them than among almost any..."

Here the page turns, and the rest of what he says is lost.

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Duchess goes solo with quest for inner peace

By Emma Wilkins

THE Duchess of York will begin a quest to find "inner peace" in her new life as a single working mother after her divorce is made absolute today.

She intends to turn over a "fresh, clean page" in her life with the formal ending of her ten-year marriage.

The Duchess said in a television interview that she had suffered from low self-confidence in the past, but was thinking positively about her future as a charity fundraiser. "It has been an incredible learning process these past years; and I don't regret, now I look forward."

The decree absolute is due to be issued today from the Family Division of the High Court in London. The marriage that began with pomp and splendour in Westminster Abbey on July 23, 1986, will end like millions of others, with a simple piece of paper. Sky News publicised the interview under the banner "HRH the Duchess of York speaks exclusively". It was



The Duchess said that she was growing up

probably the last use of the formal title Her Royal Highness, which she has agreed to surrender after the divorce.

She told the programme Live at Five that she remained friends with the Duke of York and they were devoted to their children, the Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie. "I think... well, I know... I'm a very good mother to my girls and that's the most important thing."

Andrew and I together are very good parents and I will continue to live in this country bringing them up in the best possible way and working as hard as I can.

"But I think it's an opportunity now perhaps to know a little bit more about myself... to find the inner peace. Well, that's my quest. I have had very little confidence over the last years. I'm really pleased that hopefully my children will not have to learn the hard way on that. I look forward to every day now and I look forward to the future."

The Duchess intends to throw herself into her charity activities. Yesterday she and one of her favourite charities, the Motor Neurone Disease Association, strongly denied a report that she was to be dropped as its president.

"I will help in my very small way as much as possible, if I can rally support or I can raise funds as my energy - I have a great energy for life. I love life," the Duchess said.

"If I can use that and harness that in a way to get people together and to get things together so we can really raise some money or raise awareness - because, as you know, the media is quite interested in me - then maybe we can spread the word through that medium."

"That's why I'm often quite complimentary about journalists, because I need them - I actually use them to spread the word of children that need help."

"So, you see, it's a double-edged sword. You can't complain too much about them because they actually do spread the word."

The Duchess added: "I'm more aware about what it is to live every day and to become an alive person, so to speak... to become aware of what it is to be the conductor of your own orchestra... to be the conductor of your own mind rather than the mind running you. I'm growing up, you could say."

Earl Spencer sells five of his titles

By Joanna Bale

THE Princess of Wales's brother, Earl Spencer, is selling five of his titles to raise up to £78,000 for the upkeep of his Northamptonshire stately home, Althorp.

The Manorial Lordship of Wimbledon, which dates from the Domesday Book, is likely to attract most interest and fetch an estimated £35,000 to £50,000 when it is auctioned in London on June 26, during the first week of the Wimbledon fortnight. The other titles are the Manors of Upper Boddington and Stridon in Northamptonshire, Newland Squillers in

Hertfordshire and Theddingworth, Leicestershire, are expected to fetch between £5,000 and £7,000 each.

Stephen Windos, an historical consultant for Manorial Auctioneers, a trading arm of the Manorial Society of Great Britain, said yesterday: "I am sure there will be a great deal of interest in all of them, especially the Wimbledon title, which may exceed its estimated price. As it is being sold during the Wimbledon fortnight, we might get a player buying it. The Earl needs to sell it to raise money for renovations at Althorp. These are the first titles he has sold."

Gascoigne in squad as plane row continues

By John Goodbody Sports News Correspondent

PAUL GASCOIGNE, who is at the centre of inquiries by the police and Football Association into allegations that television sets on a jumbo jet were damaged, was yesterday confirmed in the 22-man England squad for next month's European championship.

Although MPs yesterday demanded that any players found guilty of causing the £5,000 damage should be dropped from the party, the FA faxed UEFA, the European governing body, with 22 players chosen on Tuesday by Terry Venables, the England coach. Yesterday was the deadline for the 16 participating countries to finalise their squads for Euro 96.

Steve Double, the FA spokesman, said: "If we find our players were involved we will take that very seriously." But he said that the FA was "not even thinking about" dropping anyone from the party.

The players were celebrating Gascoigne's 29th birthday when the alleged incidents took place on the flight home from Hong Kong. He also allegedly argued with an air hostess. Mel Stein, Gas-



Gascoigne named as one of England's 22

coigne's agent, said his client would be co-operating with the FA inquiry. "He feels that because of all the attention he has received, he will be able to put his point of view forward."

Cathay Pacific, the airline with which the England party flew, was also interviewing its cabin staff yesterday. It confirmed that it had asked the FA for compensation.

John Carlisle, Conservative MP for Luton North and the vice-chairman of the party's Sports Committee, said: "This has happened at a time when we are worried about what is going to happen over the next few weeks when the competition gets under way. It sets a terrible example. The culprits should be identified, publicly exposed and thrown out of the squad at once. And if that includes Paul Gascoigne, then so be it."

Bryant's Eye, page 46
Rob Hughes, page 48

Cameras capture Newcastle hooligans

By Paul Wilkinson

MUGSHOTS of nearly 100 suspected football hooligans caught by closed-circuit television cameras were released by police yesterday as part of a pre-emptive crackdown on trouble at next month's Euro 96 championships.

The pictures were taken in Newcastle city centre on May 5 when the city's side lost to Tottenham, ending chances of winning the Premiership title. Publication of the pictures under the headline "Shop-A-Yob" led to thousands of calls to a police CrimeStoppers line yesterday.

Last night Northumbria Police believed they had identified as many as half the young men. Twelve had already given themselves up at police stations after seeing their photographs in the local newspaper. The pictures were taken from security videotapes of city-centre trouble involving up to 1,000 youths in the Bigg Market and at the Central Station.

Last week police arrested 19 in raids on 25 homes after targeting the "generals" of the Gremlins, a gang of hooligans who follow Newcastle United. Fifty people have since been charged.

Bishop challenges image of the weak man in the Street

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

MEN are to be invited to an audience with the Bishop of Hull, the Right Rev James Jones, to discuss their portrayal as the weaker sex in popular soap operas such as Coronation Street.

Bishop Jones believes many men see themselves as strong, independent characters able to cope with anything, as outlined by Rudyard Kipling in his poem *If*. But he fears the reality is that many men are more like Coronation Street's Jack Duckworth - ruled by their women.

Bishop Jones is to address an annual men's meeting at Driffield, East Yorkshire,

where he is spending a week on evangelism and mission. He will challenge men on whether they think the TV drama reflects a fair picture. The Bishop said: "Men would like to think they run the show. But the Coronation Street soap opera shows it is the women."

"I am hoping it will open up a discussion on how they see themselves and especially on how they see themselves in relation to God. Often, men think religion is something for men who cannot cope. Men like to think they are strong, independent and that they don't have any needs."

"The characters in Corona-

tion Street are not positive images. I don't think Coronation Street is damaging the male psyche in Britain, but any study of maleness has to make reference to the soap operas. Coronation Street shows men as weaker. In some sections of society, it may be right."

He declined to elaborate on which sections of society this might be. The Rev Richard Carill, vicar of St Peter's, Driffield, said: "He thinks men should be men so he wants to inspire them."

The all-male night at the Bell Hotel in Driffield will be preceded by a meeting with Mothers' Union members.

Tigers in peril from lack of basic care

By Nick Nuttall Environment Correspondent

HUNDREDS of the world's remaining wild tigers are dying needlessly each year for want of local veterinary skills and tranquillisers, environmentalists said yesterday. They have joined with British zoos to raise £100,000 to help to save one of the most threatened species. There are just 5,000 tigers in the wild.

Peter Lawton, chief executive of the British-based Global Tiger Patrol, said yesterday that the threat remained mainly from poachers supplying the Oriental medicines market, and from habitat loss. Significant numbers are also lost after becoming injured or snared in traps. Experts estimate that up to four wild tigers are killed each day.

Gail McGuffie of the charity, which works to save the Indian subspecies of tiger, cited cases where they could have been saved if dart guns, drugs and staff had been on hand. In one case a tiger was found with porcupine needles in its face and paws.

Global Tiger Patrol is just one of the groups that will benefit from Tiger Week, launched by the Federation of Zoos, the umbrella body for the 60 zoos and wildlife collections in Britain.

Leading article, page 21



Hari, a Sumatran tiger cub at London zoo, with its companion, Liffey, a Japanese Akita puppy. British zoos are helping to raise £100,000 to protect wild tigers

Road rage murder detective replaced

By Adrian Lee

THE policeman leading the search for the killer of a man during a road-rage attack ten days ago has been replaced. Kent Police said Detective Superintendent John Grace had gone on holiday and the inquiry into the murder of Stephen Cameron, 21, would be headed by Nick Biddiss, who holds the same rank.

Mr Biddiss, the most senior investigator with the force, has a reputation for conducting meticulous inquiries. Mr Grace will not be involved in the inquiry when he returns from holiday. A Kent Police spokeswoman said the switch was not significant and they had a number of "promising leads". Mr Biddiss was said to have been unavailable to lead the inquiry from the start.

Video footage from roadside cameras, motorway petrol stations, the Dartford and Blackwall tunnels and Dover docks has been of no use. A camera on the roundabout at Swanley, Kent, where Mr Cameron was stabbed in front of his girlfriend, Danielle Cable, was pointing away.

Speaking publicly about Mr Cameron's death for the first time yesterday, his parents, Ken and Toni, appealed for more help. Mr Cameron said on London Tonight: "Someone must know him. He's got family, friends, colleagues at work. There is something about him that is so evil... So please, if anyone knows who he is, tell someone."

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Minister orders health cuts to fund extra child beds

By Dominic Kennedy
Social Affairs
Correspondent

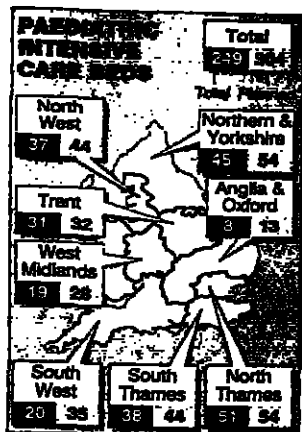
STEPHEN DORRELL ordered extra intensive care beds for critically ill children yesterday to try to stem complaints that hospitals are repeatedly turning youngsters away.

The Health Secretary said 55 more beds would be provided in England during the next three years, but left it to health authorities to find the money. Each bed costs £250,000 a year to maintain — the equivalent of 20 heart valve operations — and last night health chiefs said that important services would be squeezed.

Mr Dorrell was responding to the national outcry over the death of ten-year-old Nicholas Geldard last December. The boy collapsed at Stockport from a brain haemorrhage and was declared dead after his ambulance crossed the Pennines through a blizzard in search of a bed in Leeds.

Under Mr Dorrell's plan, a national bed bureau will be created so doctors will know which hospitals are full, saving hours of fruitless calls. Parents will not be able to ring the hotline.

Many of the new beds are likely to be concentrated in five big hospitals which already have large paediatric intensive care units: Great Ormond Street and Guy's & St Thomas's in London, Alder Hey in Liverpool, Birmingham children's hospital and Yorkhill in Glasgow. They will be expected to create squads of doctors and nurses to rush to smaller institutions in the regions.



bringing patients back for care.

The first 30 extra beds are to be ready to meet peak demand this winter. Mr Dorrell has found £2 million to send 225 nurses on 24-week courses. He decreed that paediatric intensive care, which has existed since only the early 1980s, should become one of the NHS's base commitments.

He declined to specify where savings should be made to pay for the new beds. "There are choices to be made at the margins. We are saying that adequate provision of paediatric intensive care is not at the margin."

The number of beds has grown rapidly from 127 in England in 1987 to 249 today. The 30 new beds this year will be followed by seven more next year and 18 the following year. Advances in medicine have increased demand, as doctors learn how to save severely ill children from kidney failure, cardiac problems

and cancer. The country has enough beds for nine months of the year but comes under severe pressure during the winter.

Cath Geldard, who followed her son's ambulance from Stockport to Leeds, said: "This is moving in the right direction but it's just a shame that it is existing money that they are using. Until the beds are working with trained staff I don't think we will believe it." She is continuing her legal fight for compensation.

Louise Adams, the trust council manager of the National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts, said: "Other important services will have to be squeezed unless further funds are available. The NHS is already having to cope with significant cost pressures including rising demand, more hospital admissions, continuing care and waiting list targets. And at the same time, it is being asked to make efficiency savings of 3 per cent."



Staff nurse Noreen Ging in Guy's paediatric unit, which is being used as a model for the rest of the country

EVERY paediatric intensive care patient needs a nurse at the bedside around the clock. A trained doctor is needed for every four beds.

Salaries for specially trained staff form the bulk of the £250,000 required to maintain one of the beds for a year. Each bed needs a

The cost of special care

£26,000 monitor to record heart rate, oxygen in the bloodstream and blood pressure. Most also need a ventilator costing up to £24,000. The bed will have eight syringe pumps costing a total of

£8,000. The beds cost £1,000 each.

Ian Murdoch, director of paediatric intensive care for Guy's and St Thomas's Trust in south London, said there were four patients in their 16

beds yesterday, all aged under seven months. Usually, half the patients were less than 14 months old and their average stay was four days.

The Guy's unit is being used as a model for the rest of the country. Its size allows it to be more flexible and efficient than smaller hospitals.

Tenneh's tearful farewell to England

By A Staff Reporter

TENNEH COLE, the five-year-old orphan brought to Britain for a life-saving operation, bid a tearful farewell to England yesterday as she started the return journey to Sierra Leone.

Tenneh was flown to Britain three weeks ago for surgery to remove a bullet from her skull. She lost the sight in her right eye and was left partly deaf as a result of being shot in the head.

The girl, who lost her parents during the civil war in Sierra Leone, looked overwhelmed as she appeared at a news conference at Heathrow. Colonel Mark Cook, of the Hope and Homeless charity, which raised money for the treatment at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, said: "She is overawed by the trauma of the past few days and the past 18 months. She has suffered terribly. It is very important for her to get back to her own environment."

Doctors are confident Tenneh will receive all the medical aftercare she needs in Sierra Leone.

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Eurotunnel takes a gamble with £49 return fare

By Jonathan Prynne, Transport Correspondent

EUROTUNNEL declared a "fight to the death" with ferry companies yesterday as it announced a fare of £49 for a day-return car trip to France on Le Shuttle trains.

The fare comes into effect on June 1 as part of a restructuring of the debt-laden company's prices aimed at snatching vital peak season business from its ferry company rivals. The £49 day return fare for a car and up to five passengers applies to "anti-social" crossings departing before 6am, and compares with a current day return of £75. After 6am the lowest day return is £59.

In addition a new standard "economy" return of £129 — previously £266 — will apply for departures between 6am and 10pm from June 1 until August 31.

For crossings between 10pm and 6am the economy fare is £109 and for Apex tickets bought up to 14 days in advance a return ticket is £99. There is also a "mini-break" five-day return for £59 at night and £69 during the day, which was £147 previously.

This summer's competition on the cross-Channel route is

likely to be the most intensive yet in an increasingly desperate struggle for survival.

A spokeswoman for P&O European Ferries, Eurotunnel's main rival, dismissed the company's summer offensive as "nothing to get excited about, nothing new".

She said P&O had already pledged to match any brochure prices offered by competitors and is already offering day-trip prices of £15 per car plus £1 per passenger until the end of June. The day-trip price from July 1 until the end of the year goes up to £19 per car plus £4 per passenger.

Stena, the second biggest ferry operator on the Dover to Calais route has said it will match rivals' promotional as well as brochure prices.

□ Eurotunnel is offering some of the cheapest duty-free shopping in Europe to try to entice customers away from cross-channel ferries. The company, which cut prices on all its duty-free products by up to one third last September, pledged yesterday to maintain current pricing levels until the end of duty-free shopping in Europe, scheduled for 1999.



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AKCE could be used to prevent future outbreaks, says a spokesman for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. "It's a good idea to have a vaccine that can be given to people who are at high risk of getting the disease," he says. "It's a good idea to have a vaccine that can be given to people who are at high risk of getting the disease."

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Defeated Blessed attacks 'selfish' Everest climbers

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

THE actor Brian Blessed yesterday criticised climbers who had turned Everest into a "mountain of death" through their selfish pursuit of the summit.

The Shakespearean actor, who has just returned from his third attempt on the mountain, aimed much of his anger at a Japanese team who, he said, had left three Indians to die without even offering water as they overtook them amid ruthless rivalry. Blessed, 59, was speaking in London after abandoning his climb at 25,000ft during a season in which the mountain has claimed the lives of 11 climbers so far. He said Everest "stank of death", with climbers suffering from mountain fever and "running around everywhere like headless chickens desperate to reach the summit first".

The Japanese climbers Hiroshi Hanada and Eisuke Shigekawa beat an expedition led by Mohinder Singh of the Indian, Tibetan, Border Police to become the first to reach the 8,848 metre (29,028ft) summit this season from the north side. At first they said they had been too tired to help the Indians and that above 8,000 metres was "not a place where people could afford morality". But later the Japanese released a statement claiming that one of their Sherpas had helped an Indian.

Blessed said: "The Japanese had been told not to help. When they got down, the bastards had a party. I went into their tent and took their flag down and pissed on it."



Blessed on his third trip to the "mountain of death"

He said that he had desperately tried to dissuade an Austrian mountaineer from continuing a climb that claimed his life.

"This man had no idea how dangerous Everest was," he said. "I said to him, 'You stink of death, you are obsessed with death.' I said that in two days he would be a block of ice and in two days he was a block of ice. I told his family he had died bravely. I lied to them."

Blessed took up climbing at the age of 27 and attempted Everest in 1990, dressed in 1920s clothing for a BBC documentary, and in 1993. He said yesterday: "I found that 60 per cent of the people on the mountain hadn't a clue what they were doing. Most of them turned up with one tent and without oxygen."

"I was horrified that such a high mountain experienced the lowest common denominator in human behaviour, they were like lemmings. I found people taking food from my tent and almost every day I found myself slapping people

across the face and shouting at them." Blessed, who made his name in the television series *Z Cars*, was accompanied by an ITV film crew for a Channel 4 *Encounters* programme to be shown later this year. Two of the film crew, Matt Dickinson and Alan Hinkes, did reach the summit.

Blessed lost more than three stone in weight and suffered mild frostbite in his throat and fingers during the eight-week expedition on the north ridge approach in Tibet.

"I turned back with a civilised whimper," the actor said. "I wasn't disappointed as I thought we were doing the right thing. You remember your wife and children and realise that they are more important to you than any bloody mountain."

He forecast an ignominious end to the romance of climbing the world's highest peak, predicting that in 15 years tourists would pay £50,000 to be taken up on a funicular in pressurised suits.



Brian Blessed reunited with his wife Hildegard yesterday after his aborted ascent

Cash for mother denied job share

A WOMAN has won £35,000 because her employers refused to let her return to work part-time after the birth of her second child.

Sarah Rolls, 35, of Harpenden, Hertfordshire, resigned from IPC Magazines when the company would not let her set up a job-share. Ms Rolls's claim was settled on the first day of an industrial tribunal when IPC agreed to pay £35,000 in an out-of-court settlement and develop an equal opportunities policy.

Ms Rolls said she had not taken the action for the money. "It's been the principle: I would have preferred my career," Ms Rolls took maternity leave for her first child and returned to work full-time, but after maternity leave for her second child decided she could not combine working full-time with her role as a mother of two.

Jack Low, head of communications at IPC, said: "IPC Magazines already has an equal opportunities policy as a result of discussions with the Equal Opportunities Commission over the past three years."

SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



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Tomorrow's father can be a man or a mouse

By NIGEL HAWKES

MICE could be used as surrogate fathers, carrying the sperm of endangered animals or even humans, American scientists have shown.

Dr Ralph Brinster and colleagues from the University of Pennsylvania found that spermatogonia — stem cells which produce sperm in the testes — can be preserved indefinitely by freezing. More extraordinary, they showed that cells from one species, the rat, could be introduced into the testes of mice, which then produced rat sperm.

The same technique could be used for human sperm, although this has yet to be demonstrated, say reports in *Nature* and *Nature Medicine*. Frozen stem cells could restore the fertility of cancer patients damaged by chemotherapy. The use of mammals as surrogate sperm producers might help in cases where men have stem cells but, as a result of an accident or genetic problems, cannot produce sperm. The sperm would then be used for in-vitro fertilisation.

Miniature reserve helps save rare snail

By NICK NUTTALL

THE world's smallest nature reserve has been set up by British scientists to save the world's rarest snails.

During the past few weeks three species of tree snails have been sent to their native island of Moorea, near Tahiti. They have been extinct in the wild for more than a decade. Their new home is 20 square metres of rainforest enclosed by an electric fence surrounded by a moat filled with salt, to keep out a predatory snail.

Nearly 250 Partula snails, akin to Darwin's finches in importance as they enable scientists to see how evolution works, have been brought in from the University of Nottingham and Bristol, London, Chester, Edinburgh, Jersey and Detroit zoos, where they have been bred. Others are from Martin Mere, Lancashire, part of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust.

Dave Clarke, head keeper of London Zoo's invertebrate conservation centre, said: "One of the species was down to just four individuals. But we have a thousand now."

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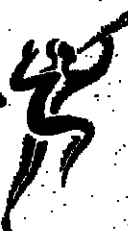
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The killer had four handguns and 743 rounds. He fired 104 shots before shooting himself

Families listen as expert retraces gunman's steps

REPORTS BY STEPHEN FARRELL AND GILLIAN BOWDITCH

THOMAS HAMILTON fired 105 bullets around the Dunblane gymnasium, including dum-dum-type rounds designed to inflict maximum injury, a ballistics expert told the inquiry.

When he walked into the school Hamilton was carrying 743 rounds and four handguns — two 9mm Browning pistols and two .357 Smith and Wesson revolvers. He used just one of the Brownings to shoot his victims. He then put a Smith and Wesson into his mouth and fired one bullet through the top of his head.

Eileen Harrild, a teacher who was injured, and relatives of the victims craned forward in the public gallery at Stirling's Albert Hall yesterday to hear Malcolm Chisholm's soft voice as he methodically went through the forensic evidence, following Hamilton's deadly progress.

Mr Chisholm said the gymnasium floor was "strewn" with spent cartridges when he arrived at 11.30am, two hours after the massacre. There was silence in the hall as a picture appeared on television monitors showing the scene that

greeted him. Hamilton, dressed entirely in black, was sprawled on his back beside a wall.

Mr Chisholm said Hamilton had fired his first shot outside the gymnasium, apparently accidentally as he cocked the Browning in a passageway. He then burst through the gym door and fired 29 rounds around the room, emptying one magazine and loading a fresh one.

He walked up the left-hand side of the gym, stopping to fire six shots across the width of the room, then another eight further along. When he reached the top of the gym he fired 30 rounds from two more magazines back in the direction he had come.

He then fired once through a window by the fire exit, pushed open the door and fired four shots into a cloakroom and nine shots into a neighbouring classroom.

Hamilton, who was carrying the handguns in holsters and the ammunition in pouches slung from two shoulder straps, re-entered the gym and sprayed the rest of the shots indiscriminately around

the interior. "He then switched the pistol from his right hand into his left hand and drew the Smith and Wesson revolver with his right hand. He then placed the muzzle of this gun in his mouth, pointing upward, and pulled the trigger," Mr Chisholm said.

Professor Anthony Busuttil, 50, Regius Professor at Edinburgh University, who carried out a post-mortem examination on Hamilton, said that he had died instantly. Tests showed no traces of drugs or alcohol and there were no abnormalities in Hamilton's health.

The killer's body was found lying near the fire exit. The Smith and Wesson was still in his hand. Beside him were three loaded guns, his spectacles and woolly hat. Near the gym door was a camera bag which police feared might have been a booby trap. The building was evacuated until bomb disposal experts gave the all-clear.

Hamilton's Browning was a customised self-loading weapon with an extended barrel, popular for target shooting and with the military, Mr Chisholm said. The firing mechanism had been ground down to make it sensitive to the slightest touch on the trigger. Tests showed that the pistol could fire a full magazine of 20 shots in 5.46 seconds and it would take 50.4 seconds to load and fire 105 shots.

Hamilton had loaded a mixture of round-nosed, flat-nosed and hollowpoint 9mm bullets for the Brownings. Hollowpoint rounds, Mr Chisholm said, were designed to expand on impact and cause the maximum amount of damage, similar to dum-dum bullets which had been banned by the Geneva Convention. Asked why the hollowpoint bullet had not been banned, he said: "I can't understand it. It is in general use in America. Most of the police forces in America use it."



Gwennie Mayor, the teacher who died, and the children Thomas Hamilton opened fire on when he walked into Dunblane Primary School. A new security system will ensure that all doors are locked during school hours and visitors will be vetted by reception staff via an intercom

Overloaded phone network caused confusion for police

CONFUSION reigned for hours after the massacre as emergency workers struggled to identify the dead and wounded, the police officer in charge said.

Detectives at the school could not contact the outside world because the school telephone line was jammed by calls from parents and media. The mobile phone network was overloaded and police radios were deemed insecure.

Detective Chief Superintendent John Ogg, the officer in charge of the inquiry, admitted that Central Scotland Police had never simu-

lated a mass shooting in training sessions. Police were called at 9.41am and officers were on the scene at 9.50. He arrived at 10.05am. The first priority, he said, had been to set up a cordon and ferry the injured to hospital. The last was removed at 11am. But identifying the dead was made harder by the death of Gwennie Mayor and because the class register had not been completed.

Problems also arose from his decision not to take the names of injured children as they were loaded into ambulances, he said. That meant

police needed to talk to the hospital, but had "tremendous difficulty" because of the phone problems.

Jack Beattie, a consultant paediatrician at Stirling Royal Infirmary, said the hospital's accident and emergency department was alerted to the shootings at 9.48am. Within minutes the possibility of multiple child casualties was known.

Dr Beattie said he reached the school at 10.15am. The first task was to evaluate casualties and those who were still alive before putting patients in order of priority.

Teacher saved pupils shot at in classroom

A TEACHER saved her pupils from being shot after she saw Thomas Hamilton through the window and told them to lie on the floor.

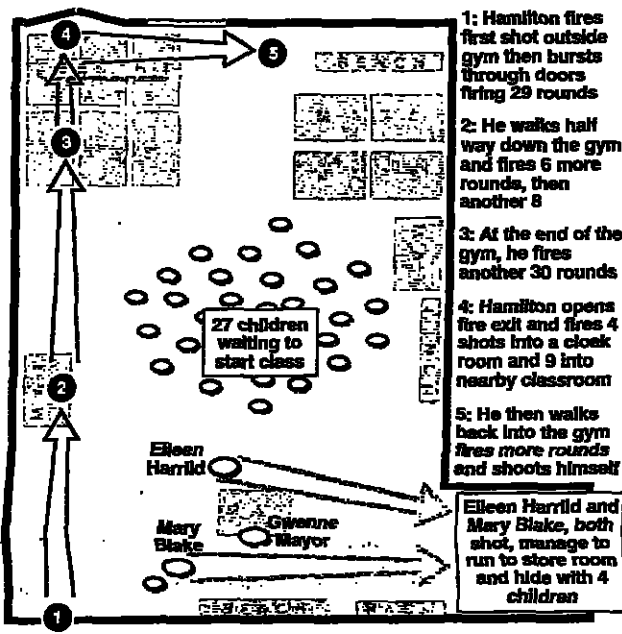
Hamilton fired nine shots into a hut where the pupils were lying. "This was very fortunate as one of the bullets went through the back of a chair. Four exited from windows on the other side of the class," the inquiry was told.

One pupil walked up the side of the gym as Hamilton was shooting. Hamilton fired at him, but missed. The child was injured by broken glass. Hamilton tried to cut the telephone line to the school

before the massacre. George Anderson, 32, a BT engineer, was called to the area the next day after a number of residents complained of a fault.

He told the court he did a number of tests before spotting a wire which had been cut at the bottom of the telephone pole outside the school. He immediately contacted the police.

Audrey McMillan said in a statement she saw Hamilton take tools from a white van parked close to the telegraph pole on the morning of the massacre, before he entered the school. The inquiry continues.



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Martin Bell helps Bosnian translator to finish education

By PAUL WILKINSON

MARTIN BELL, the BBC's war correspondent in the former Yugoslavia, is helping a victim of the conflict to complete her education in Britain. He has joined forces with Brigadier Richard Dannatt, a former commander of British troops in the country, to sponsor one of the Army's Bosnian interpreters at a British university. They are raising funds to pay for Sanya Stanojevic, 29, to take an MA in international relations at Durham University, starting next September.

The civil war cut short Miss Stanojevic's promising career as a language tutor and court and TV interpreter. Her flat in Sarajevo was destroyed and her parents' home in the city damaged by machinegun fire. Miss Stanojevic, a graduate in English language and literature from Sarajevo University, has a Serb father and Croat mother and was brought up in the city's Muslim quarter. In



Bell impressed by Miss Stanojevic's courage

1994 she found a job as an interpreter with a British battalion of the UN, and within four weeks was seconded to the sector commander for high-level talks with leaders of the warring parties. There, her dedication and bravery in dangerous conditions impressed everyone with whom she came into contact.

Brigadier Andrew Ridgway, one of the British commanders

she worked with, said: "She worked extraordinarily long hours without complaint. She is also extremely brave. She refused to be left behind during negotiations to release detained UK liaison officers. She was never intimidated by aggressive various warring factions and always remained cool and professional."

Mr Bell said yesterday: "She is a wonderful person who did brilliant work for the British during the fighting. She has known nothing but war for the past three years. We hope the chance to study somewhere peaceful is some recompense for all the service she has done not only the UN and Nato, but her country as well."

Mr Bell, who has now swapped his Bosnia flak-jacket for an assignment in Kashmir, has contributed part of the royalties from his book *In Harm's Way*, towards Miss Stanojevic's costs. He said: "I knew Sanya for two years in Gornji Vakuf and was impressed by her many qualities,



Sanya Stanojevic in Bosnia with Brigadier Richard Dannatt, who suggested she be brought to Britain

especially her loyalty to those she worked for, her competence and her courage. It is obvious that she cares deeply for the future of her country and wishes to be part of it.

"It took Brigadier Dannatt to recognise her potential and that we should do something for her. We have to invest in

the future. One can only hope it will be good. With Sanya things are going to happen."

Brigadier Dannatt, commander of the UN's southwestern sector in Bosnia until his return last month to the 4th Armoured Brigade in Germany, said Miss Stanojevic was about £10,000 short

of the money she needed for the course. He was contacting people and groups who knew her during the war to ask for help. "Her experiences during the war have given her a fascinating perspective on the Balkans," he said. "She wishes to develop a career now that the war is apparently over and

my predecessors and I want to help her." Miss Stanojevic, who also speaks French and Italian, said: "It is marvellous because these are studies I would have undertaken before the war. It is an opportunity to do something of practical use to my country. To achieve it is a dream come true."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cat trapped for 45 days escapes a curious fate

A four-year-old cat has been found after being trapped for 45 days under floorboards at a house being renovated near his home. Bruno, who weighed over a stone when curiosity got the better of him, "was just like a sack of bones with a head", said his owner, Aubrey Pitts, 48, of Teignmouth, Devon.

The black and white cat, who suffered temporary blindness, was put on a drip feed at a veterinary centre in Torquay until yesterday. "He is now eating and quite bright," Mr Pitts, a taxi proprietor, said. "The prognosis is hopeful."

Murder trial date

A man charged with murdering Vikki Thompson, who was bludgeoned while walking her dog last August, is to stand trial in November. Mark Weston, 21, of Ascot-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire, a near neighbour of Mrs Thompson, denied the charge when he appeared at Oxford Crown Court.

Propeller death

An aircraft passenger who walked into a propeller after an emergency landing has died in hospital. Graham Marples, 44, from London, was hurt after the plane came down in a field near Basingstoke en route from Holland. The pilot, Graham Jones, 35, of Sydenham, southeast London, faces a drugs charge.

North Sea patrol

Greenpeace activists on board the *Sirius* are scouring the North Sea for fishermen, mainly Danish, who they say are "hoovering" sand eels — tiny fish at the hub of the food chain. Greenpeace says such industrial fishing is damaging sensitive areas and threatening seabirds and predatory fish.

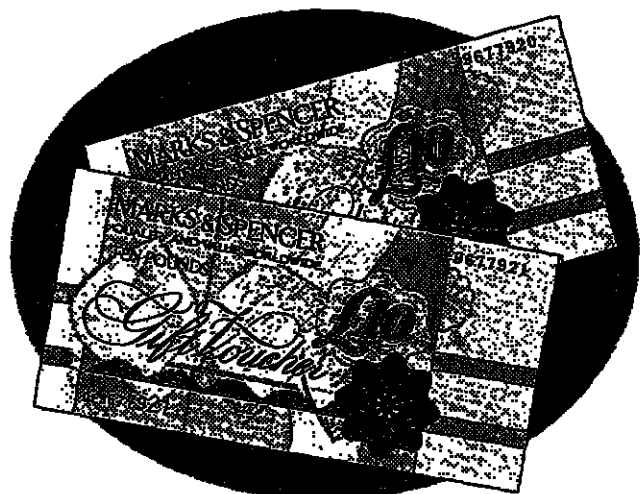
Ghost channel

The National Trust has set up a closed-circuit television system so that visitors at the Treasurer's House in York can keep watch on a tiny cellar where the ghosts of Roman soldiers are alleged to have been sighted. The cellar is too cramped to be open to the public.

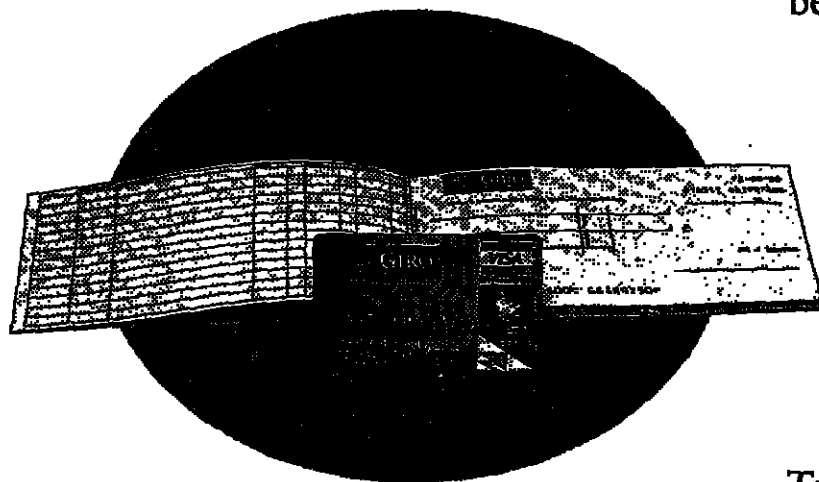
Long overdue

A book that disappeared from Scotland's Faculty of Advocates almost 200 years ago has been returned. The book, a French translation of the works of Plato published in 1700, turned up at an auction in Canada and has been returned via the National Library of Scotland.

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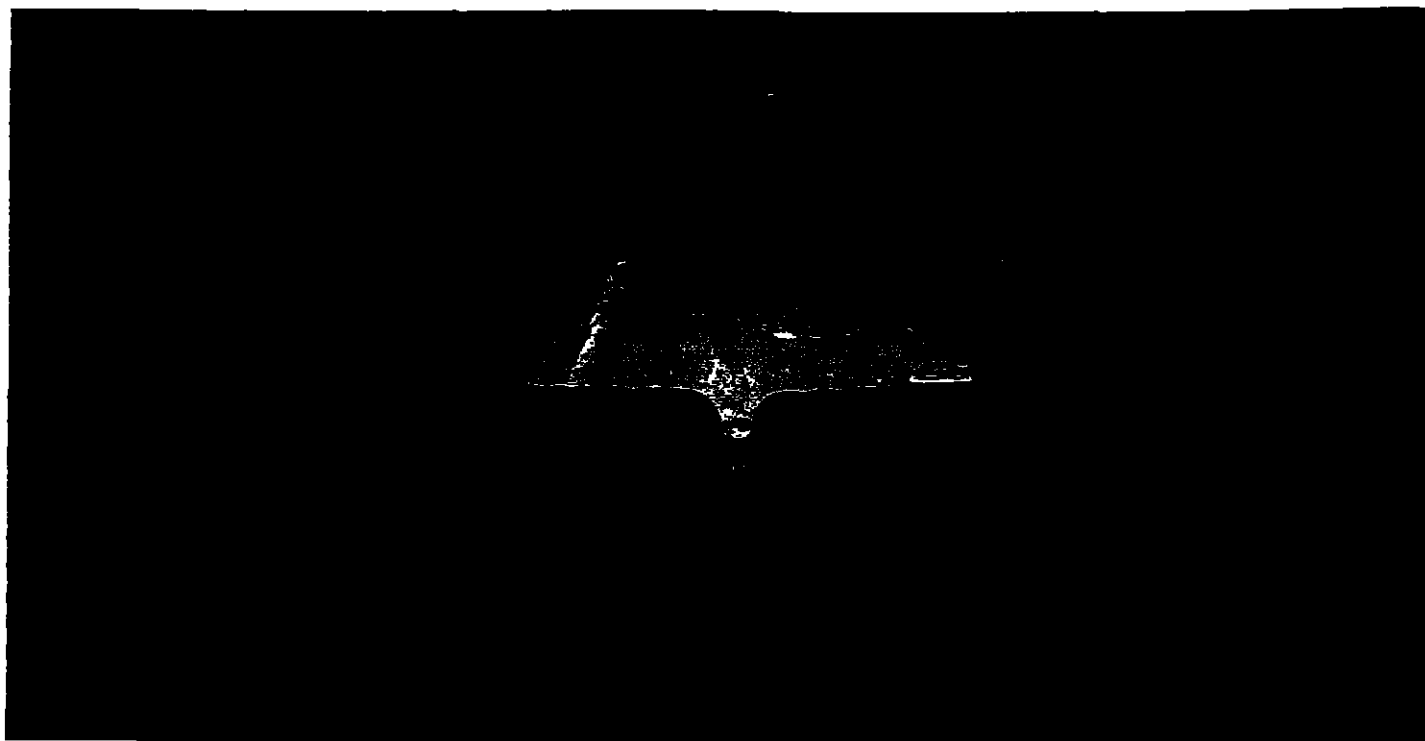
Cat trapped for 45 days escapes a curious fate

A four-year-old cat was found after being trapped 45 days under floorboards in a house being renovated. The cat, named Brownie, weighed over a stone and was found by a neighbour. The cat was found with a head injury and was taken to a vet. The cat was found in a room with a hole in the floor. The cat was found in a room with a hole in the floor. The cat was found in a room with a hole in the floor.

Murder trial

A man charged with the murder of a woman was found guilty. The man was found guilty of the murder of a woman. The man was found guilty of the murder of a woman. The man was found guilty of the murder of a woman. The man was found guilty of the murder of a woman. The man was found guilty of the murder of a woman.

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Turnout of less than 50 per cent could lead to renewed nationalist criticism of Government's decision



The Women's Coalition hopes to win at least two seats at the forum to ensure women's voices will be heard

Women cross the religious divide to defy tradition

By Nicholas Watt

A GRASSROOTS alliance of women drawn from both sides of the religious divide is challenging the traditional parties in today's election.

University lecturers, community workers and housewives—all political novices—are fighting under the banner of the Women's Coalition. They have been showering the Province with leaflets railing against the failure of the main parties to promote women and to move beyond nationalism and Unionism. Flourishing their slogan "Wave goodbye to dinosaurs", the coalition is fielding 70 candidates in every constituency. They hope to win at least two seats at the forum to ensure that women's voices will be heard at the all-party talks. The main parties are fielding only a handful of women candidates, which is in line with the gross under-representation of women in Ulster politics.

The Coalition has inevitably attracted comparisons with the Peace People who won widespread support in the 1970s for their campaigns against violence. Monica McWilliams, founder of the coalition, plays down the comparisons and says the coalition has a broader and more political appeal. But she will be aware that fringe groups, such as the Peace People, never manage to dent the support of traditional parties.

Canvassers for the Women's Coalition, who are mainly political novices, have been receiving a friendly reception

on the stump from men and women. One man in East Belfast shouted "About time too" as a group of women handed out leaflets from a car bedecked with colourful coalition posters.

Old habits die hard and one elderly man turned to a canvasser and said: "You're not that women's lib lot, are you?" Pearl Sagar, who has become an accomplished performer on the stump at her first try, shot back: "That arrived ages ago. Didn't your wife tell you about that?"

Mrs Sagar, 37, a community worker in East Belfast, hopes that the Coalition can provide a model for resolving Northern Ireland's differences. As she campaigned with her two daughters she said: "We have Protestants and Catholics and women from different social backgrounds. We believe that everybody should be entitled to their views. We should not seek to change them but we should learn to live together."

The Women's Coalition has attracted considerable publicity in the run up to the election, not least because they have enlisted the support of Jane Morrice, head of the European Commission office in Belfast. Mrs Sagar puts their success down to a growing frustration in both communities at the failure of the main parties to move beyond their traditional agendas. She said: "A lot of people feel let down by politicians who will not move out of their Orange and Green trenches."

Poll for peace has failed to excite Ulster voters

By Nicholas Watt, Chief Ireland Correspondent

VOTERS go to the polls in Northern Ireland today amid fears that the historic election to all-party talks will attract a low turnout.

As Unionist and nationalist politicians criss-crossed the Province yesterday in a final round of canvassing, a leading political observer said the election had failed to excite voters. Dr Sydney Elliott, a psephologist at Queen's University, Belfast, said a turnout of less than 50 per cent would raise question marks over the Government's controversial decision to hold the election.

"Anything less than a 50 per cent turnout would show that the electorate were not convinced about the electoral route to talks," Dr Elliott said. He said voters appeared to be confused by the complex nature of the election, which is designed to provide negotiators for all-party talks.

A low turnout would lead to renewed criticism of the Government from nationalists

who vehemently opposed the election. The SDLP and Sinn Féin said John Major's decision to hold the election was designed to appease Unionists and to stall the start of negotiations. However, successful results for the SDLP and Sinn Féin might dampen their criticisms.

Sinn Féin is widely expected to achieve its normal poll of about 10 per cent, in spite of the refusal of the IRA to restore its ceasefire. The party has a hard core of support throughout Northern Ireland. Sinn Féin's efficient electoral machinery will ensure that its supporters make it to the poll. There has been speculation that John Hume's SDLP could challenge one of the main Unionist parties to top the poll. In the 1994 European election Mr Hume won 28.9 per cent compared with the Rev Ian Paisley's 29.2 per cent.

A victory for Mr Hume would provide an enormous boost to the SDLP. Such a

result would owe more to divisions among Unionists than any sea change in favour of nationalists. Ten Unionist parties are standing, which led David Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionists, to say that a "shredding" of their vote could weaken the position of Unionists.

Mr Trimble's performance will provide the first major test of his leadership since he succeeded Sir James Molyneux last September. There have been criticisms of Mr Trimble for running a lacklustre campaign and Mr Paisley has attacked leading Ulster Unionists for accepting the IRA ceasefire in 1994.

Mr Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionists, is hoping to do well because he always tops the European election, which is the only other poll held on an all-Northern Ireland basis. Mr Trimble will hope that he is saved by the unique form of today's election, which com-

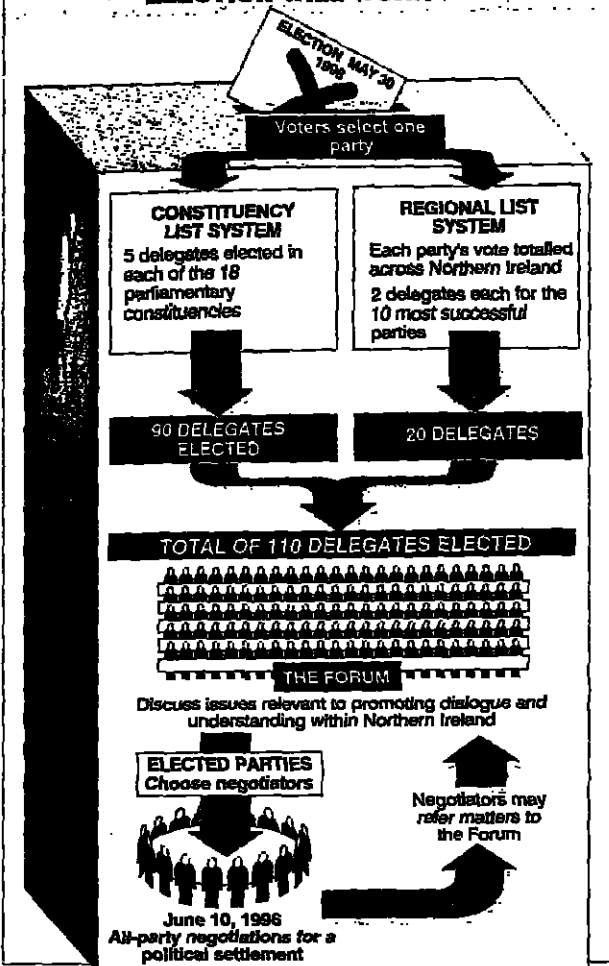
bines the constituency system with a list system.

Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, will invite the forum to name three negotiators and three advisers to attend all-party talks on June 10. Sinn Féin will not be invited unless the IRA restores its ceasefire.

The Northern Ireland Office has spent £100,000 promoting the election with the slogan: "Your voice, your choice, your future." Ministers opted for the election as the only hope of winning widespread support for all-party talks after the IRA made clear that it would not disarm ahead of a political settlement.

Before the ceasefire collapsed Mr Trimble said he would talk to Sinn Féin if it stood in the election. If the IRA restores its ceasefire before the talks, the Ulster Unionists will insist on cast-iron guarantees that it will disarm before the party would contemplate talking to republicans.

HOW THE NORTHERN IRELAND ELECTION WILL WORK



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Whitewater slows Clinton bandwagon

Convictions
add fire to
Republican
assault on
White House

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER
IN WASHINGTON

TWO DAYS ago President Clinton appeared to be coasting to re-election. Yesterday, after the convictions of his political heir and former business partners in the first big Whitewater trial, his future in Washington looked much less certain.

The Whitewater affair was once again plastered across America's front pages. Gleeful Republicans launched fresh assaults on Mr Clinton's weakest electoral suits — his character and integrity. Most important, the long-running investigation of Kenneth Starr, the Whitewater special prosecutor, gained huge impetus and credibility just when it was stalling.

Over recent months White House allies had successfully tarnished Mr Starr by portraying him as a highly partisan Republican bent on destroying the President. Had he failed to win Tuesday's convictions, his 21-month investigation would almost certainly have collapsed. In the event, he persuaded a jury of 12 independent citizens from Mr Clinton's own state that some of the former Governor's closest associates had committed serious crimes, and Mr Starr will be emboldened to forge ahead, even if the President or First Lady are implicated.

A particularly acute danger for the White House is that Mr Starr will now be able to persuade Jim and Susan McDougal, Mr Clinton's partners in the Whitewater Development Corporation, and



The President's guilty friends: Jim Tucker, left, who has now resigned as Arkansas Governor, and Jim and Susan McDougal. The trio face jail and heavy fines

Jim Guy Tucker, his successor as Arkansas Governor, to testify against the Clintons in return for lesser sentences. The trio all face prison and hefty fines following their convictions, and on Tuesday night Mr Tucker resigned as Governor.

Aside from events in Arkansas in the 1980s, Mr Starr has also been investigating events in Washington over the past three years, including the suicide of Vincent Foster, the deputy White House counsel, the dismissal of the White House travel office, and the mysterious disappearance and reappearance of subpoenaed records detailing the legal work Mrs Clinton did for Madison Guaranty, the failed bank at the heart of the Whitewater affair.

"The Washington phase of the investigation is very active," Mr Starr pointedly told reporters following Tuesday's convictions, and he is said to

be close to deciding whether to bring charges against past or present members of the Administration.

The only good news for Mr Clinton yesterday was the denial by several jurors — widely disseminated by the White House — that they had disbelieved his testimony for the defence. They said his evidence was largely irrelevant and insisted they had



Clinton: off the record

based their verdicts on copious documentary evidence presented by the prosecution.

Tucker and the McDougals were convicted for illegally obtaining \$3 million in government-insured loans during the 1980s from both Madison, which Jim McDougal owned, and Capital Management Services, a collapsed investment company owned by David Hale, a former Little Rock

judge. Both institutions appear to have been used as piggy-banks by the state's political elite, and Madison funds were funnelled into the bank collapsed at a cost to the taxpayer of \$60 million.

Republicans brushed aside repeated White House statements emphasising that the President himself had been accused of no wrongdoing. A

spokesman for Newt Gingrich said the verdicts showed that "swirling around then-Governor Clinton was a mass of corruption and criminality". Alfonso D'Amato, chairman of the Senate Whitewater committee, said the verdicts showed "the seriousness and depth of Whitewater for those who said there was nothing there".

Senator D'Amato's commit-

tee had wound down its investigation and was due to publish its report on June 17, but he said it would now make a fresh attempt to interrogate Hale, who was the prosecution's star witness. Hale had previously refused, citing his constitutional right against self-incrimination.

The next Whitewater trial also begins in mid-June. Mr Starr is prosecuting two Arkansas bankers for making illegal campaign contributions to Mr Clinton when he was Governor of the state, and the President is again expected to have to testify for the defence.

Bob Dole, the Republican presidential nominee, stayed above the fray yesterday, but Mike Murphy, one of his advertising men, commented: "Convicted is a very powerful word."

William Rees-Mogg, page 20
Leading article, page 21

Rifkind calls for vigorous US ties

FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON

MALCOLM RIFKIND, the Foreign Secretary, attempted yesterday to cement the relationship between Britain and America by demanding vigorous economic and security co-operation for the 21st century.

In a wide-ranging speech in Washington, Mr Rifkind promoted Britain as the enterprise centre of Europe and highlighted the importance of a joint economic partnership.

"Our bilateral link is not separate from a wider partnership. It is part of its foundation," he told the National Press Club. "Our common outlook, our shared values, our long tradition of consultation and co-operation: all are central to the broader relationship. The links between Britain and the US are a bond that holds Europe and North America together."

He cited European interests in America which provided 5.5 million jobs, including more than 125,000 from British investment in Pennsylvania, New York and North Carolina. Jaguar, Brooks Brothers, Selfridges and Dunkin' Donuts were all examples of Anglo-American commercial accomplishment. Mr Rifkind attacked US moves to impose sanctions on companies trading with Cuba, Iran and Libya. Britain and America should avoid actions damaging to economic co-operation.

Turning to political co-operation, Mr Rifkind was quick to refute a perceived crack in relations between America and its European allies over the Dayton peace accord for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"Bosnia is a story of transatlantic success," he said. "When Europe and North America are divided progress is impossible... but when we overcome division, our capacity for effective action was huge. Transatlantic unity was the foundation of success. That lesson applies around the globe."

First Lady declares diary-free zone

Washington: Hillary Clinton plans to write a book on her experiences as First Lady, but dare not keep a diary in case her husband's political enemies subpoena it (Martin Fletcher writes).

"Heavens, no!" Mrs Clinton exclaimed when an interviewer asked on Tuesday night if she had kept a record of her White House years. "It would get subpoenaed. I can't write anything down."

If congressional Republicans got hold of her diaries, they'd go after and persecute every friend of mine, everybody I'd ever

talked with, everyone I've had a conversation with," Mrs Clinton said.

Republicans have intensely scrutinised Mrs Clinton's roles in the Whitewater affair and the dismissal of the White House travel office. They have subpoenaed many of her friends and aides to testify or surrender confidential documents.

Mrs Clinton said she would have to rely on schedules and other official records to write her memoirs. "There's been a real crimp put in history by these absurd investigations," she protested.

US bishops devise 'marital sex' rule to halt gay ordination

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

TRADITIONALIST bishops in the American Episcopal Church have devised a new strategy to oppose the ordination of homosexuals. They called on the church's General Convention (its equivalent of the General Synod) to demand that ordinands abstain from sex outside marriage — effectively barring gays, who are not allowed to marry.

The bishops have also pledged to set up a "fellowship of Episcopal parishes and dioceses which uphold scriptural authority", a decision that in effect creates a church within a church, if not resulting eventually in a formal split. The ten Episcopal bish-

ops met at an airport hotel in Texas to announce their continuing campaign against homosexual priests. Earlier this month an ecclesiastical court found that there were no grounds to prosecute a liberal, retired bishop for heresy after he knowingly ordained a self-proclaimed homosexual. The court found that no "core doctrines" had been broken by the Right Rev Walter Righter.

Having failed with the heresy ploy, the traditionalists, led by the Right Rev James Stanton, the Bishop of Dallas, announced their intention to seek the no-sex-without-marriage pledge from ordinands. The motion may be put to the convention next summer.

Their gambit may be overtaken by events if a proposal before the Supreme Court of Hawaii succeeds in letting gays wed — thus opening the way for legal, if not quite "holy", gay marriage. Bishop Stanton expressed disappointment over Bishop Righter's trial. He said that "two millennia of Christian teaching regarding God's purposes in creation" had been discarded in one leap.

\$10m deal in Korean air crash case

FROM GILES WHITTILL
IN SAN FRANCISCO

THIRTEEN years after fighters shot down a Korean airliner for straying into Soviet airspace, the airline is to pay the family of one passenger a record \$10 million (£6.6 million) in damages.

The payment, the largest of its kind, will go to the widow and children of Chung Yeung Kim, a Korean businessman who died aboard Korean Air Lines' Flight 007 when it plunged into the North Pacific after being struck by Soviet missiles in 1983.

In a last-minute, out-of-court settlement, the airline agreed to pay the money as a lump sum, with Lloyd's of London footing the bill, according to US news reports. The payment is to compensate for lost earnings which lawyers argued would have accrued from a hotel and other businesses of Mr Kim which have faded since his death.

"Lloyd's is going to have to empty the till on this one," a Kim family attorney said in Los Angeles, where the case was due to go to trial on Tuesday. The deal may be taken by other victims' families as acknowledgement of responsibility by the airline.

California vines dug up in trendy hop to real ale

BY QUENTIN LETTS

A CALIFORNIAN wine maker, disturbed by the sudden popularity of British-style real ale in America, is ripping out mature vines to make way for hops.

The Benziger family, which is in its third generation of making prize-winning cabernet and merlot vintages in the Sonoma valley, north of San Francisco, intends to devote 20 prime acres to hops. The family described the decision as "heart-breaking" but making commercial sense.

In line with the old slogan for Ansell's Bitter ("if you can't beat 'em, join 'em"), it intends to start making its own brand of real ale.

The heir to the vineyard, Jerry Benziger, 38, is being packed off to a beer institute in Chicago to cleanse his mind of viniculture and learn the brewer's art. It is thought to be the first retreat by the wine business in an area which has seen extraordinary vine growth since the 1980s. The Napa Valley, best known of America's vineyard districts, is nearby.

Real ales were practically extinct in the United States ten

years ago, but have made a comeback. Raymond McGrath, president of the Beer Institute in Washington, said: "Five years ago there were fewer than 50 small brewers. Now there are 900." Hops are traditionally used to flavour beer, although some major US breweries did not bother with them when making the pale, palate-cheating draughts previously poured, ice cold, in American saloons. "They didn't consider them necessary," Mr McGrath said.

The return of real ale has been a boon to English hop farmers. Buyers tend to be young, well-off and thirsty for strong flavours. Charley Even, a former Wall Street trader who runs a small brewery for microbrewery in New York state, said: "I make an English-style ale and the best ingredients come from Britain." Real ale now accounts for 2 per cent of the vast American beer market, and English hop farmers will hope that the Benzigers' decision is not repeated in California.

Things have reached such a pass that a Boston ale, Samuel Adams, is to be sold in Britain.

'Speed' star Reeves hurt in accident

BY GILES WHITTILL

KEANU REEVES, the actor and occasional pop musician, was recovering in hospital yesterday after being knocked off his motorcycle in an accident on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood.

Life imitated art for the star of *Speed* when he hit one car while swerving to avoid another at a busy junction in the heart of the city's nightclub district. The 31-year-old motorcycle enthusiast was riding a British-made 1975 Norton.

Mr Reeves, who had recently finished work on a new action film called *Chain Reaction*, suffered minor cuts to the face and a chipped ankle bone, according to a spokesman for the Queen of Angels Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Centre, where the actor was taken by ambulance after the accident.

He underwent surgery on his ankle and was kept in yesterday for observation, hospital sources said. The actor and his staff have yet to comment on the details of the accident or whether he intends to continue riding motorcycles, but he is known to own powerful Italian and American machines in addition to the Norton.

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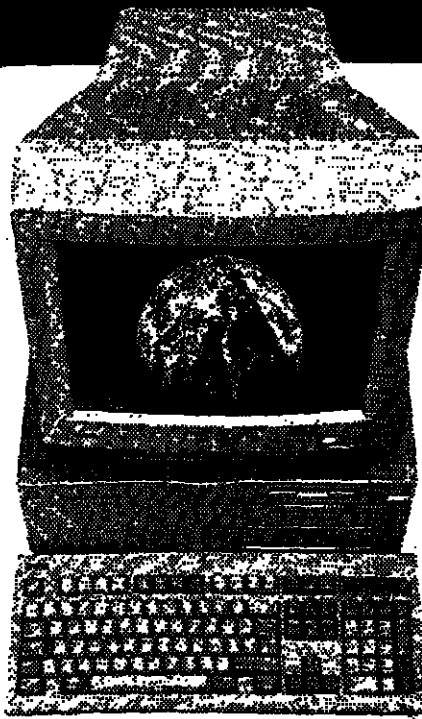
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Beethoven: rumoured to have had syphilis

Hairsplitting exercise will put Beethoven's hearing to the test

By TOM RHODES

THE unruly hair which has embodied the musical genius of Ludwig van Beethoven from sculpture to Hollywood may soon yield a host of unsavoury facts about the German composer nearly 170 years after his death.

Through a bizarre series of twists and turns, 582 strands of the musician's hair have made their way from his deathbed in 19th-century Vienna to a laboratory in

Tucson, Arizona, where they could provide perhaps the most intriguing revelations about Beethoven's elusive personal life and even his exceptional talent.

Its two owners hope that the curl will supply answers to many of the questions which so long have eluded academics, including whether the unmarried composer was ever treated for syphilis and whether his deafness was caused by lead poisoning. A team of top American scientists has been assembled by

the musical devotees to conduct a series of experiments on the hair.

Having bid \$7,300 (£5,000) for the relic at Sotheby's, Ira Brilliant, a retired estate agent, and Alfredo Guevara, a urologist, believe the hair could ensure as enduring a personal portrait of the man as the symphonies, sonatas and oratorios provide for the maestro's work.

Some strands have already been tested and the anthropology department at the University of Arizona has already concluded that, despite

a widespread plague of head lice in 19th-century Europe, Beethoven's wild mane was free of nits.

It is generally accepted by modern scholars that, in addition to his stoic acceptance of increasing deafness, Beethoven suffered cirrhosis of the liver, chronic kidney stones and constant intestinal difficulties. According to the notes of one doctor who treated him in Vienna, the composer had a continual bout of diarrhoea while finishing his Piano Concerto in B flat. As yet there have

been no signs that he used morphine to ease the pain but appears to have relied on large quantities of wine.

The hair was cut from his head by a young student after Beethoven's death at 56 in 1827 and surfaced during the Second World War when it was given to a Danish doctor by Jews he had helped to smuggle out of Nazi Germany. Believed to be the thickest clump in existence, it will soon be transferred to another research centre at Naperville, Illinois, where scientists will search for traces of mercury and lead.

Mercury was the standard treatment for syphilis at the time and, while there is no evidence that Beethoven ever had sex with anyone, rumours of the condition have persisted since one doctor burned the composer's treatment notes.

The Illinois scientists will also be analysing the relic for lead, which could have caused the composer hearing loss.

Drug ring arrests deliver fresh blow to US Navy image

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THE battered image of the US Navy suffered a fresh blow yesterday with the disclosure that 21 American sailors have been arrested in Naples for smuggling heroin and cocaine into Italy.

The first arrests were on May 16, arousing speculation they may have contributed to the pressures that drove Admiral Mike Boorda, Chief of Naval Operations, to suicide in Washington that day.

The admiral faced questions about the legitimacy of his Vietnam War decorations and was already worried about the US Navy's reputation after the Tailhook sexual harassment scandal and several unwelcome incidents at the Annapolis Naval Academy.

The sailors involved were recruited by Nigerian dealers because they could cross national borders with relative ease and were reportedly paid up to \$30,000 (£19,000) to smuggle 10lb to 12lb of drugs at a time from Istanbul.

The ring was broken after

it was infiltrated by agents from the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. Most of those involved were junior enlisted sailors, but one was a lieutenant-commander and two apparently had top-level security clearance. There was no evidence that the sailors, subject to random drug tests, used narcotics themselves. "The motivation here was money, not intoxication," a naval source said.

A naval commander has meanwhile admitted writing an anonymous letter published in the *Navy Times* three days before Admiral Boorda's suicide, which said he had lost his peers' respect and should resign.

John Carey, recently relieved of his command of a guided-missile destroyer for abusing the crew, apologised but said the admiral was "the last person in the navy any of us thought might kill himself".

The admiral's widow, Bettie, has decided not to release her husband's two suicide notes, but para-

phrased one in a message to all sailors on Tuesday.

She wrote: "Today, if he were writing to you, it might be something like the following. You are the heart and soul of our navy. Take care of each other. Be honorable. Do what is right. Forgive when it makes sense, punish when you must, but always work... to help people be all they really can be and should be."

The commander of the navy's Blue Angels flying team has resigned because he felt his performance was inadequate. Commander Donnie Cochran was the first black to join and then lead the daredevil team. *The Washington Post* said some white pilots had complained that he got the job because of his colour.

A statement by the Blue Angels said Commander Cochran "understood that safety is paramount, and was concerned that his difficulties were beginning to impair the viability of the demonstration".

Ship crew accused of dumping stowaways

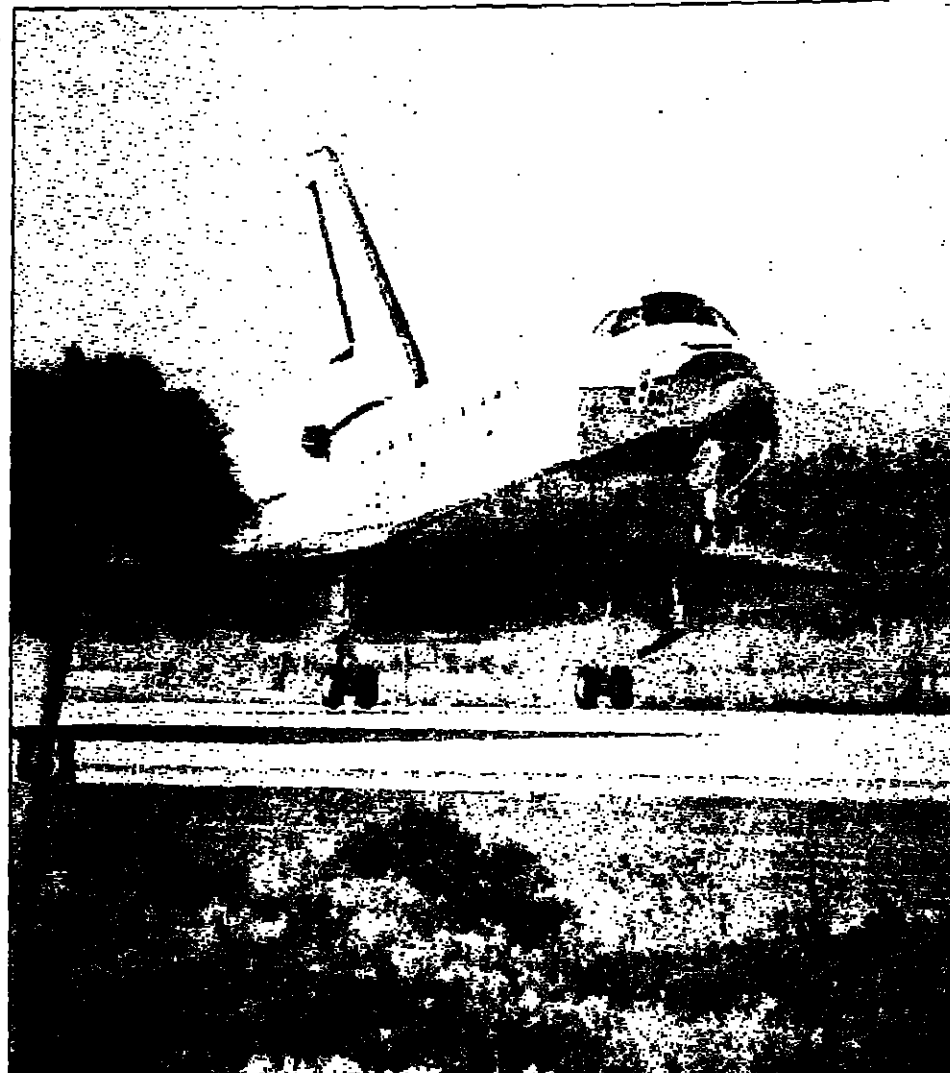
FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN BUCHAREST

ROMANIA yesterday demanded the extradition from Canada of the captain and crew of a Taiwanese container ship who allegedly threw three Romanian stowaways overboard. The general prosecutor's office and Romania's Supreme Court have issued arrest warrants against seven crew members believed to have been involved.

Two Romanians were put on a makeshift raft on March 12, a day after *The Dubai* left the Spanish port of Algeciras for Canada, crew members said. They were too frightened to report the incident until a third Romanian was found and disappeared on May 18.

The crew said they were ordered to make a makeshift raft from an oil drum for the two men found in March. They last saw them adrift about 30 miles from land.

Romanian papers said the third man was thrown overboard, with no hope of survival. When a fourth man was found, the crew hid him. He was turned over to Canada's Immigration Department.



The Endeavour space shuttle lands at Cape Canaveral, Florida, yesterday after its crew of six successfully completed a complex ten-day scientific mission that included the release of an inflated giant antenna and growing pure crystals

Protest veteran arrested in China

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PEKING

IN A sign of nervousness in the run-up to the seventh anniversary of the violent suppression of pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square, police detained a dissident, Wang Donghai, who had sent a petition to parliament demanding the release of human rights activists like Wei Jingsheng. China's number one political prisoner.

Security was stepped up in Peking, despite the fact that the human rights movement in China has been virtually crushed. More People's Armed Police elements were on guard yesterday around foreign diplomatic compounds and embassies, and there was an increased presence of plain-clothes security men in the diplomatic quarter.

"The authorities are nervous," said one foreign diplomat here. "These are preventative measures to guard against any possible embarrassing incidents. But it's difficult to think there can be any major protest because most dissidents are in prison, in exile, have been co-opted into the system or have given up the struggle."

Mr Wang, who was detained on Tuesday, had joined six other activists in sending a petition to the standing committee of the National People's Congress, demanding the release of Wei, who is currently serving a 14-year prison sentence, and other political detainees.

"We call for the immediate unconditional release of Wei Jingsheng along with all others detained for political and religious crimes," the petition said.

Mr Wang, 45, a store manager, was jailed for two years for his role in the pro-democracy demonstrations that were crushed on June 4, 1989, and was again held briefly last December.

He called in the petition for the Government to reverse its condemnation of the 1989 student movement as a "counter-revolutionary rebellion" and to punish all those involved in the crackdown.

Sex charge dropped against Barry Sheene

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

AN INDECENT assault allegation against Barry Sheene, the former British world motorcycle champion, and Gerhard Berger, the Austrian racing driver, has been withdrawn by a 20-year-old woman.

Melanie Hiltzinger, who works in a menswear boutique, had accused the grand prix stars of fondling her breasts in a shopping centre on the Queensland Gold Coast, a few miles from Sheene's home. She claimed the two men approached her during a lunch break.

Yesterday Queensland police said the complaint had been withdrawn, after a full investigation. The decision

followed an announcement by the woman's solicitor, Bill Potts, that his client did not wish the complaint to proceed. "Miss Hiltzinger is pleased that the matters between her and Mr Berger and Mr Sheene have been withdrawn and she now wants to be left alone," he said.

Mr Michael King, a solicitor for the two men, said: "Mr Berger and Mr Sheene are delighted this matter is now over and they intend to devote their time and attention to their respective business pursuits. They wish to thank all those persons who have offered expressions of support to them over the last few weeks."

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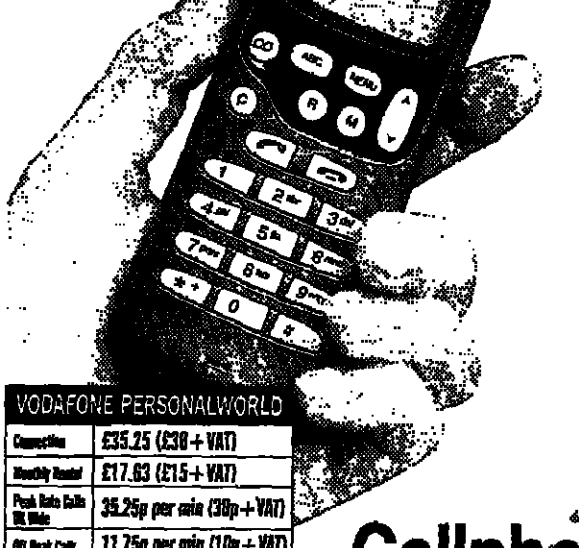


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Yeltsin makes offer of power-sharing to Chechen rebels

FROM THOMAS DE WAAL IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN has stepped up the pressure to achieve a peace settlement in Chechnia before the June 16 presidential election with the announcement yesterday of a new power-sharing treaty for the republic.

The arrangement would give Chechnia many more powers than any part of Russia. In the full text of the document, which will be released tomorrow, Chechnia will be called a "sovereign state" within the Russian Federation.

Sergei Shakhrai, the former Nationalities Minister who is one of the authors of the document, said there would be a month of discussion inside Chechnia for the final details to be worked out.

The document caps a peace effort conducted over the past few days. The Chechen rebels, who have insisted on full independence for their republic, will find it difficult to reject the document altogether.

However, the fighting continued yesterday. Two Russian soldiers died and two were wounded after their armoured personnel carrier was blown up by a remote-controlled bomb in central Grozny. But the attack may have been the work of freelance Chechen rebels and was not enough to derail the peace process. Talks begin on Saturday about enforcing a full

ceasefire in the republic.

Another soldier was killed and seven others suffered burns when a Russian Interior Ministry helicopter was shot down near the Chechen village of Tsentaroj, RTR Russian state television said.

Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, the rebel Chechen leader, returned to the village of Shali yesterday to a hero's welcome. Villagers and gunmen gathered to salute him after his trip to the Kremlin. Mr Yandarbiyev called Mr Yeltsin a "wolf cub", adding that it was a mark of respect.

Saturday's talks will first of all focus on a long-term truce before considering political issues. President Yeltsin, in an interview on Novosibirsk television, said he was pleased by Mr Yandarbiyev's visit to Moscow and his own visit to Chechnia on Tuesday. The Russian newspapers treated his four-hour trip to the region as a brilliant electoral coup.

The new peace process differs from the one that broke down last summer in that it is backed up by the personal guarantee of the leaders of the two warring sides. In the past, truces have been ignored in Chechnia in what may in some cases have been subordination. Mr Yeltsin put his authority on the line yesterday when he addressed the high

command of the Defence Ministry. He said that in observing the truce "every shot will be investigated for the reason it occurred".

The President admitted "mistakes" by the military and the politicians in the war, in which as many as 30,000 people have died.

"Lack of co-ordination in their actions and low standards of professionalism sometimes led to significant losses both among the troops and the civilian population."

General Pavel Grachev, the Russian Defence Minister, who has lost face because of the truce, accused generals "who had no honour" of trying to undermine him.

Much of the Russian press is on death watch for General Grachev, who is now Mr Yeltsin's longest serving minister, and predicts his resignation every day.

The head of an international mediating mission in Chechnia yesterday praised the ceasefire deal but said the future was still shaky.

Tim Guldemann, who represents the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe in the region, said: "I am relatively optimistic about the next ten days. But if in the next six weeks there is no major progress in this fragile process, I would not be that optimistic."



Yandarbiyev: returned from Kremlin visit to a hero's welcome in Chechnia

Albanian campaign grows for new poll

BY JAMES PETTIFER AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

ALBANIAN opposition parties vowed yesterday to keep up the pressure on the Government to organise new elections as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe joined other international bodies in casting doubt over last weekend's election.

Although calm had returned to Tirana, the capital, yesterday after riot police wielding truncheons broke up an opposition rally on Tuesday, the former communist Socialist Party called for daily protests throughout the country until new elections are held. "We want to prove that we are numerous and that the current Government is not democratic," Kastriot Islami, of the Socialist Party, said.

President Berisha's ruling Democratic Party has claimed a huge victory over the Socialists, who pulled out of the election with five other parties hours before the polls closed on Sunday.

The open and blatant vote-rigging seems to have taken Western diplomatic missions by surprise. Given Dr Berisha's high standing in the West as one of the few beacons of stability and progress in the Balkans. The warning signs have been flashing for some time, however, as serious human rights violations built up over the past year with attacks on independent media and the judiciary. Organised crime has been spreading and mafia gangs supporting Dr Berisha undoubtedly played a part in intimidating opposition voters at the polls.

The much-vaunted Albanian economic miracle has been seen by some independent analysts as a matter of smoke and mirrors, with large areas of the countryside enduring near medieval conditions and a very overvalued currency bringing hardship to poorer families even in Tirana.

Another problem for Dr Berisha was electoral arithmetic. There seems little doubt that support for the Democratic Party never exceeded 40 per cent of the electorate and it may have been lower in some key districts. Without manipulation, it was never going to be possible to secure a decisive majority.

Two held over death of Briton

Budapest: Almost a year after the stabbing to death of a British tourist, Hungarian police have arrested two youths in connection with his murder (Adam LeBar writes).

Christopher Stangroom, 30, from Streatham, south London, was killed last July on Margit Island, a popular beauty spot in the Danube. His belongings were stolen and his body lay unidentified in a Hungarian mortuary for days after he was murdered. The 16-year-old suspects, who had been sniffing glue, were part of a gang that stole mountain bikes, police said.

Greece cancels Turkish talks

Athens: Giving Turkey's current domestic political uncertainty as the reason, Greece withdrew from a meeting of the Greek and Turkish foreign ministers that was to take place in Berlin next week to discuss its differences with that country. A communiqué said the meeting would "not be useful in the present context and not until conditions were created for new contact... at this level". (AFP)

Left holds on in Canadian vote

Ottawa: The left-of-centre New Democratic administration, under its new leader Glen Clark, defied the pundits to hang on to power in elections in the Canadian province of British Columbia (Richard Cleroux writes). His party won 39 seats against 33 for the fast-rising Liberals. The parties previously held 50 and 14 seats respectively.

Abbé Pierre leaves France

Paris: Abbé Pierre, 83, the once-beloved French priest who dramatically fell from grace after voicing support for a revisionist interpretation of the Holocaust by his historian friend, Roger Garaudy, has quit his native country for an Italian monastery, where he may spend the rest of his life.

Thais shaken by royal scandal

BY LEYLA LINTON AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE Thai royal house has been thrown into controversy after a London-based aide associated with the wife of the Crown Prince has been dismissed. Air Chief Marshal Anand Rodsamkhan's dismissal, and his probable loss of all military ranks, is the latest shock to the Chakri dynasty founded in 1782.

Thais view King Bhumibol with almost god-like respect, but Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn's antics have long caused deep dismay in Bangkok.

An order signed by Banham Silpa-archa, the Prime Minister, announcing the dismissal was published in yesterday's Bangkok newspapers. Copies of the order were posted on the walls of the palace of Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn in Pakkret, north of Bangkok.

The order said it would be better if the air chief marshal did not return to Thailand. By implication the same applies to the Crown Prince's wife, Mom Sujarinee. Both are to be stripped of diplomatic status.

The Crown Prince is a dashing figure who has the

rank of army general and occasionally flies air force F5 jets from Bangkok airport. The antithesis of his austere father, King Bhumibol, he has a fondness for fast women and constantly figures in the Bangkok rumour-mill.

The Crown Princess has been resident in London for some time, with her daughter. Two sons of Prince Vajiralongkorn are at Harrow.

The announcement was made 24 hours after Princess Sujarinee's daughter, Mom Chao Busnamphej Mahidol, seven, was flown back from London by her father.

Spain brings back juries

Madrid: Spain this week reintroduced the jury system for the first time since its abrupt abolition 60 years ago (Tunku Varadarajan writes).

The system, one of many institutions which fell victim to the Spanish Civil War, was brought back only for three experimental trials, involving nine-person juries, or *jurados populares*. Observers hope that the practice will soon be adopted more widely in the country's Roman-Napoleonic legal system, traditionally dominated by magistrates.

Sri Lanka emergency declared to end strike

FROM REUTER IN COLOMBO

THE Sri Lankan Government invoked emergency regulations yesterday to break a strike that has left the island without centrally generated electricity.

Under the regulations, which take immediate effect, the state power generation and distribution utilities are declared to be essential services. A government spokesman said the move would mean that Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) workers would

be forced to resume work or face serious penalties, including the confiscation of their property.

Power was cut shortly after noon yesterday when about 14,000 employees went on strike, officials said.

The workers are demanding a halt to moves to privatise the Lanka Electricity Company, the state power distributor, an end to private sector power plants and the payment of outstanding wage increases.

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The dilemma faced by homosexuals at work is investigated by Beverley Kemp

There are lesbian and gay bankers, accountants, lawyers and insurance brokers in every leading organisation in the City of London. But leading a double life brings unique pressures. Ruth is a partner in a London law firm. Penny is an artist. The couple have lived together for nine years. Ruth is in her early forties and Penny in her late thirties. While they are "out" to their friends and families, Ruth is not open about her sexuality to her colleagues and fellow partners.

RUTH'S STORY

"You simply forget about your personal and home life the moment you walk into your office. The idea of taking Penny to a business function or Christmas party and introducing her to everybody as my partner doesn't bear thinking about. Everyone in the room would turn around and stare with their mouths wide open. Years ago I took a friend's boyfriend to an office Christmas party because I was new in the firm and didn't want everyone to think I had no one to invite. It was a big mistake. People asked after Ben for weeks afterwards. Whenever the firm holds a function to which partners are invited now, I either make up an excuse or go alone. It's easy to turn invitations down.

"A couple of my partners are aware of my sexuality. One chap made a pass at me when we were on a residential conference. I made it clear that I wasn't interested but he kept asking 'Why? What's the matter?' Pointing out that he was married didn't seem to have any effect. Finally I said 'Look, I'm just not interested in men. I'm gay.' He was mortified and terribly apologetic. Subsequently we have become quite good friends. The absence of sexual undertone means we can relax and enjoy each other's company if we are staying in the same hotel or entertaining clients together.

"But it hasn't always worked out like that. On one occasion I was working away from home on an important deal and Penny and I were going through a very rough patch and I'd just had a really upsetting phone call from her. A colleague noticed I wasn't my usual self and asked what was wrong. I explained that I was having relationship difficulties and he looked surprised and said he didn't know I was in a serious relationship. I said 'You wouldn't. I don't talk about it at work because my long-term



Many lesbians and gay men choose to hide their sexuality from everyone at work, fearing discrimination. The pressure they face from colleagues can be intense

Hidden lives - the trouble with being gay in the City

partner is another woman.' At the time he seemed very sympathetic and reacted quite well.

"But our working relationship began to change in subtle ways. It seemed as if I had gone down in his esteem as a competent professional woman. There was a sense of not being seen to be 'sound' and reliable as before.

"Over the years you develop a wall around you to ensure that your private life stays private. You simply never mention it. Gradually people learn not to ask about my life outside the office. You build a 'don't touch' barrier around yourself.

"But there is always a sense of isolation from my peers. As far as I'm aware I'm the only lesbian out of 50 partners and 100 staff. There's one other man whom I suspect is gay but neither of us is likely to ask

the other. I'm sufficiently senior and well established in the firm to know that I would never lose my job because I'm a lesbian. But I can't face becoming the brunt of gossip throughout the firm. Telling people at work about your partner or child is hardly earth-shattering stuff if you are straight. To tell colleagues that you are gay is a far more personal disclosure because it is exceptional and has sexual connotations. Straight people don't tend to announce in general conversation what they particularly like doing in bed. By admitting you're a lesbian you are telling people something fundamental about your sexual preferences.

"The fact that I will not come out at work has caused massive rows in my relationship with Penny. She sees it as a form of disloyalty to her rather than a good strategy to

minimise hassle. She tells me that she feels like a non-person. I feel irritated that she cannot seem to understand that it's far more complicated than that. Being in the closet at work has nothing to do with my feelings for or commitment to her. Part of me feels she's just making a fuss about a principle because I know she'd never want to come to business dinners with me anyway. But it's a problem in our relationship that we can never agree on."

PENNY'S STORY

"Every time she brings home an invitation addressed to 'Ruth and guest' we'll end up having another row. No one else in the firm gets the 'and guest' tag. Those two little words make me feel that my role in

her life is nameless. Every time she goes to a business dinner alone she is pretending to be single and heterosexual when she is neither of those things. Sometimes I feel like a dark, dirty secret in her life. The woman hidden away at home who must never be spoken about during the day. The partner of nearly ten years who can never accompany her to her office parties.

"I've never seen inside her office. When a male friend went to meet her for lunch once it felt so bizarre asking him to describe her office to me. I've never met her secretary or any of the colleagues whose names I know so well. Over time you develop a perverse curiosity to know what these people look like, how they dress and whether their personalities match the image you have of them. It's pathetic really! "We have a relationship that in

many ways is more stable and committed than a lot of heterosexual relationships we know of. So it hurts me that the woman I love can go out of our home 7am until 7pm and completely deny my existence and our relationship for 12 hours a day, five days a week. I know how important I am in her life but I'd still like the privilege every straight person takes for granted: having your role as someone's partner acknowledged in the daytime.

"The rational part of me understands the dilemma Ruth has to deal with. Of course I don't want her to be gossiped about or undermined at work. She turns down a lot of invitations to various things, and I worry that doing so will ultimately have a negative impact on her career. While Ruth doesn't do what a lot of other lesbians in the City we know do, and invent a

fictional male partner, I still see her way of coping with her sexuality at work as being fundamentally dishonest. Both of us know that there's no way she would ever be fired for being gay. Most of her colleagues probably assume that she is anyway. Why not just turn round and say 'Yes, I am'.

"Several of Ruth's clients ring her at home so I find myself feeling awkward answering the telephone in my own home. The automatic thought is always 'I wonder if that's caused Ruth any embarrassment'.

"Clients usually just bark 'Can I speak to Ruth please?' as if I'm a switchboard operator or rattle off long messages. Occasionally it would be nice if someone said 'Hello Penny. How are you?' But that never happens.

"On a deeper level I have a problem understanding how she can bear to work alongside people and in an environment that is profoundly homophobic. We'd never choose to socialise with people who are homophobic yet every day she spends hours in a place where if people knew who she really was their opinion of her would alter dramatically.

"We are completely out to both our friends and families but I just have to accept that our working worlds are completely different. My own sexuality has never been an issue for me. In the arts it's hardly a problem that I'm a lesbian. You are talking about a world that is positively brimming with gay men. You can be as unconventional as you want to be.

"I find it hard to understand how Ruth can go into the office and never say 'We did this over the weekend'. Major events like moving house and holidays are never mentioned. On the odd occasions where someone has asked what she did over the Christmas period she told them that she went home to visit her mother. How she deals with questions about holidays, I have no idea. I've never asked her.

"On a practical level there are complications that straight people would never have with their partners. If there was ever an absolute emergency and Ruth was away or tied up in a meeting I don't know what I would do. I can never say to her secretary 'Can you remind her that we are doing such and such this evening?' The firm sponsors various theatre and sports events and there are always free tickets for partners and staff to take their wives, husbands and friends. Of course I'd enjoy an evening in a box at the theatre or good seats at Wimbledon. Who wouldn't? But we don't take advantage of any perks like that because it might look dodgy if Ruth took another woman along to everything.

"Sometimes I do feel I might be happier with a partner who was completely open about her sexuality in all areas of their life. But Ruth is the woman I love and it's her career at stake, not mine. If only she didn't have to lead this crazy double life."

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Identical twins of nurture and nature take a toll

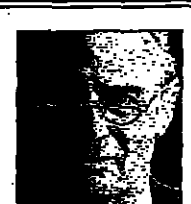
Shocked into dying

BILL and John Bloomfield, identical twins from Perth, Western Australia, both died within two minutes of each other this week after being inseparable for 61 years. That

their individuality as soon as is practicable.

In 1933 Dr Elizabeth Bryan, then an honorary consultant paediatrician at Queen Charlotte's and Hammersmith

and tend to feel that the larger sibling should be better at fending for itself. The danger is that preferences, once established in the cot, can last into childhood.



MEDICAL BRIEFING
Dr Thomas Stuttard

Their coronary arteries would have been identical, too, and presumably would have furred up at the same rate. The shock of the death of one, who slumped over the restaurant table, was enough to trigger an acute myocardial infarction in the other. The suggestion is that the sudden shock either raises blood pressure in a patient with coronary artery disease sufficiently to dislodge a patch of atheroma which can then block an artery, or it may cause a fatal spasm in a diseased vessel.

The way in which twins should be brought up is a matter of debate, but there is agreement that every effort should be made to encourage

any minor differences that might distinguish them so the children can be called by name. All twins, and identical twins in particular, make two close emotional relationships from birth, with each other and with their parents. Twins soon become interdependent and by the age of six months are adept at comforting each other: some parents resent this.

Initially, one twin is usually larger. Parents find it difficult to treat both equally; in some cases the smaller one gets the lion's share of care, in other households the larger baby is favoured. Conversely other parents, particularly the mothers, are attracted to a smaller one's helplessness,

The Duchess and her pills

ONE of the Duchess of York's advisers, Jack Temple, 78, implied on television that her emotional, domestic and other problems may have stemmed from taking too many slimming pills.

The Government, it is reported, is considering banning slimming pills. Even without a ban no doctor would recom-

ment that a patient rely on pills alone to lose weight.

The suggestion is that the Duchess might have been treated with either Duromine, which is phentermine, or Ponderax, which is fenfluramine, both of which were supplied for other patients by her New York doctor. Neither is particularly powerful nor strongly addictive, but they do have an amphetamine-type action and taken in excess can have a similar stimulant action to speed or cocaine. These slimming drugs have similar side effects as amphetamines, such as inappropriate behaviour or euphoria.

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Seven go to Vermeer

Julia Llewellyn Smith talks to some of the 20,000 British pilgrims who went to the painter's definitive exhibition

JOHN TUSA
Barbican boss
cost of trip: £300 each
method of travel: plane

JOHN TUSA, 60, former head of the BBC World Service and now managing director of the Barbican Centre in London, visited with his wife, Ann, in March for two nights. In January, some friends asked us if we wanted to come with them. I'm afraid we were terribly passive about it all. We booked with Time Out, and flew to Amsterdam and stayed at the Park Hotel in The Hague. We thought the exhibition was absolutely wonderful. The sheer concentration of so much work in one place makes you look and think so much harder than in a general gallery, where you are going from one artist to another. "Our tickets were for 10.30am, so you were moving slowly, but this meant you stood in front of each picture for far longer than most of us do normally, so you were forced to speculate about each picture in detail. After an hour and a half we were exhausted. "The pleasure of Vermeer is that so little is known about him and so much is speculation."



Ann and John Tusa: "wonderful"

Amsterdam and took a train to The Hague. We had booked tickets for 9am, there were maybe ten or 12 people in each room and after three minutes you could stand in front of each picture for as long as you liked. "Even if you know the paintings, the exhibition was a revelation. They are relatively small pictures, but there is plenty of space around them. There is something entirely sublime about the quietness of Vermeer's paintings."

DAVID SHUTT
art department head
cost of trip: £100 each
method of travel: coach

DAVID SHUTT, 50, is head of art and design at Canterbury Christ Church Higher Education College. He visited with a party of 58 students and staff for three nights. "We went with Isis educational travel, in a double-decker coach. About half of us were under 22, the others were mainly mature students and tutors aged between 35 and 45. "We were travelling on Le Shuttle. Almost immediately, the coach had a blow-out and we were delayed, which was very worrying as we were booked in to the exhibition for 6pm and it was obvious we wouldn't make it. In the end we arrived at 7.30 and the last entry is at seven, but they let us in. Everyone left at eight so we had the exhibition to ourselves until nine. "The following morning about 12 of us returned, the rest stayed in Amsterdam. The crowds were incredible, like the Underground in the rush hour. If you lose your temper in front of a Vermeer you miss the point, his pictures are all about tranquillity. "We were staying in Amsterdam. I think that the younger ones sampled the Amsterdam nightlife. On Saturday we visited Haarlem and on Sunday we went to Arnhem. It was a terrific experience."

SAM ROSENSTEIN
retired ad executive
cost of trip: £220 each
method of travel: plane

SAM ROSENSTEIN, 65, a widow from Essex, visited the exhibition in April for two days with Julie Middleton, a friend of 50 years. "I had been in Washington DC when the exhibition was on there, but I stupidly missed it, so when I realised it was going to be a once in a lifetime thing I resolved to go. "The travel agents got the times of the planes wrong. Luckily I keep an Air UK timetable, so I checked and we got there on time, but it could have been a disaster. "We spent one night in Amsterdam. We went to The Hague first thing in the morning and spent about two hours at the exhibition. After an hour and a half, there was a crush and we had to be patient. Nobody was telling you to hurry up, though: I felt there was a sort of bond between all the visitors. "It was a revelation to me. His work was so open and impressionistic but only in this very controlled construction of the painting. You realise that a line of cobbles that look as if they have been painted meticulously are really just a dash of paint. There's such a relish for weight and the feeling of flesh."



A souvenir of Vermeer

ERIC BROWN
former chartered accountant
cost of trip: £325 each
method of travel: plane and train

ERIC BROWN from south London, a former chartered accountant, and his wife Sheila, both 85, visited at the end of March. "We had seen all but four of the Vermeers in our travels, so we knew we had to go to this. We flew to

JAN KING
garden designer
cost of trip: not known
method of travel: plane

JAN KING, 46, went with her husband Anthony, 62, Professor of Politics at Essex University. "My husband organised the trip;



Time to ponder: a visitor at the Mauritshuis Museum in The Hague; the exhibition closes on June 9

ROSIE LOCKLEY
A-level student
cost of trip: £300 each
method of travel: coach

ROSIE LOCKLEY, 17, from Tunbridge Wells, went in April with her Uncle Jim. "We went during my Easter holidays on a coach full of grannies, which went on Le Shuttle and to The Hague. We stayed near the exhibition. Our tickets were for 10am and we stayed for about half a day and after a while you couldn't move, but it was easy to forget about the other people. "I didn't have a clue what to expect but I was really impressed. I want my own Vermeer now. My uncle was a bit irritating sometimes, he was trying to pick flaws in the paintings and he would say things like 'The perspective's not right', when to me it was just perfect. We both agreed that the pearl earring in the *Girl with the Pearl*

Earring couldn't possibly be a pearl, it was a silver disc. You could get headphones with commentary but they weren't very informative."

ARIEL CRITALL
painter
cost of trip: not known
method of travel: car and ferry

"I AM 81, so getting to the Vermeer was a tremendous effort for me. But when you overcome these challenges you feel quite splendid. I went with my friend Orlando, who is 76. "A friend who lives in The Hague lent us his house as he was away. On Saturday we went to Delft and on Sunday we went to the Vermeer. Our tickets were for 2pm. The exhibition was terribly crowded. My friend is diabetic and was about to give up on me, but I managed to pull him through the crowds to an empty window seat. Despite our difficulties, we had a lovely time."

When a friend's death becomes a rite of passage

How prepared are we for the loss of our contemporaries?

ONE OF my best friends died recently. He had been fighting a painful, debilitating and ultimately hopeless battle against cancer, so his death was hardly a shock. He was facing yet another operation and I was half expecting the call from his wife. Yet the news still shook me to the core. It was nothing to do with the cliché about emphasising my mortality — I have never needed much reminding of that. Rather, it was that in my early forties, I am not prepared for the loss of contemporaries. My father died suddenly five years ago, a moment that is one of the classic rites of passage. He, too, should have lived longer, but the shock and sorrow was of a different order. Right from childhood, we fear the death of a parent. But there is no genetic programming where friends are concerned. Only a year ago Kevin was a fit, fun-loving family man with three school-age children and a promising career. Even as a student, when we shared a house, he never smoked. The injustice of his plight struck everyone during his long illness. Nor could he have fought the disease more determinedly. Doctors marvelled at the way he survived the initial surgery and even managed a return to his beloved golf course before the recurrence we were all dreading. Even then, he refused to give in. Having drifted apart after university, we had seen little of each other. In typical male fashion, we never wrote and seldom phoned, but it hardly took a moment to pick up the threads. Kevin never changed: we would still disagree about politics and football, and love every minute of it. My wife and I drove up to see him after the first operation, and found him weakened but by no means despondent. We tried to do normal things. He roamed a short walk and talked of plans for an uncertain future; he came out for a meal, even though eating had ceased to be a pleasure. The laughter was still there, but it was harder to enjoy. At the time there were still hopes of a recovery, yet I could not help but wonder if we would see him again. On the surface at least, Kevin was the least sentimental of men and the last thing he would have wanted was an emotional parting. We left him promising to visit us when he was stronger, but that time never came. Instead there were months of tests, more surgery and heart-ache. Although he refused to be confined to bed, as he lost weight and speech became more difficult he became understandably reluctant to see visitors. Our wives talked regularly. But that male reserve reared its head again and practically ended communication between us. I meant to write, or even send a jokey fax to help to keep his spirits up, but what could I say? The time for trivia seemed to have passed, and our relationship was such that anything deeper would have been akin to the last rites. The funeral was agony, trying not to watch his family grieve, listening to an exquisitely moving poem by his son. Kevin could not have asked for more: the church packed for a non-religious service led by an understanding vicar and his local closed in his honour on a Saturday. I still feel guilty at my inability to be more help, my only compensation that he would have understood, because he would probably have found it as difficult if roles had been reversed. I would like to think that the experience will make me better able to handle the loss of friends, but I doubt it.



JOHN O'LEARY

That male reserve reared its head again

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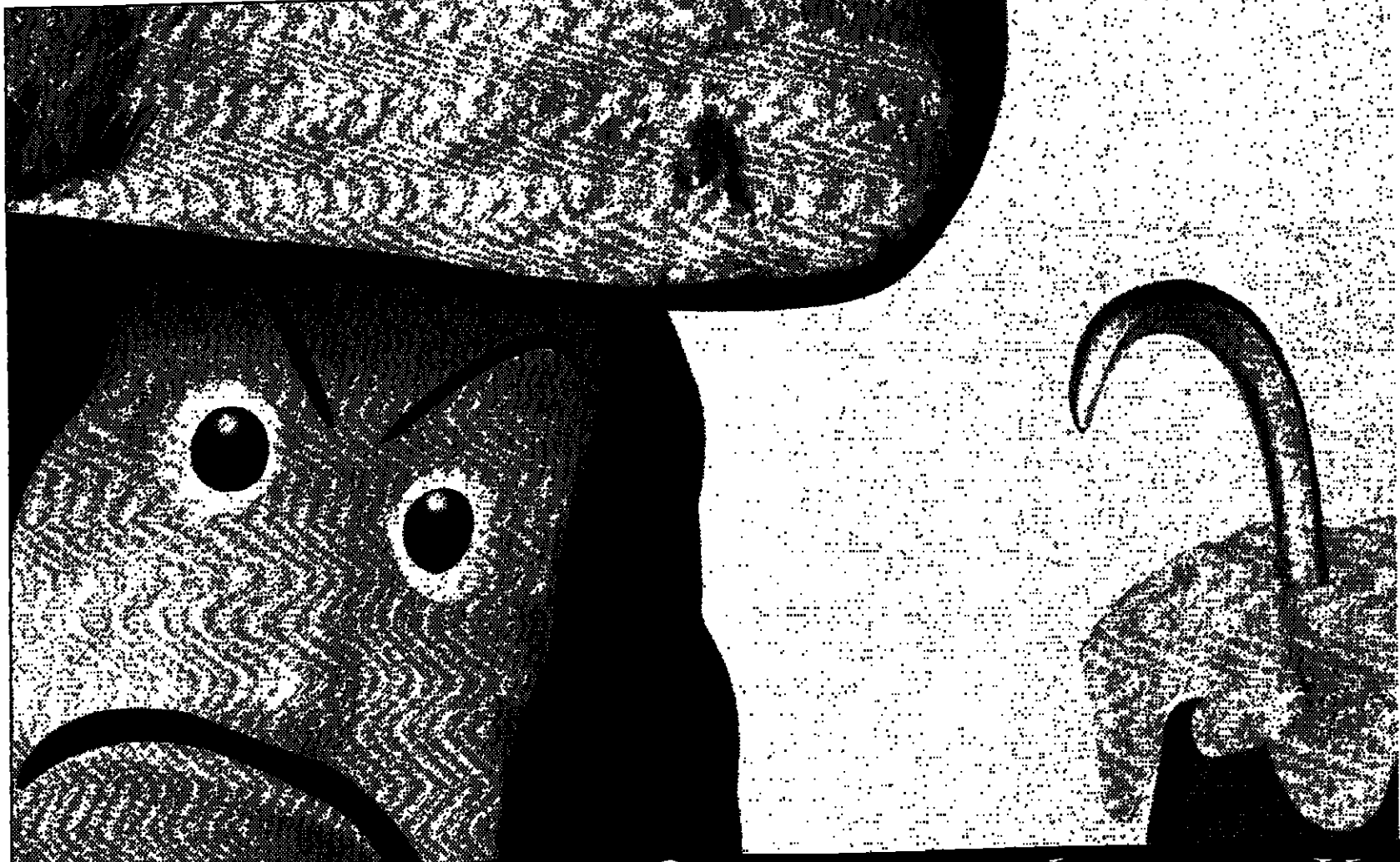
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It's a long way to save the Union

Conor Cruise O'Brien on his metamorphosis from Irish nationalist to Unionist candidate

In Ireland, changing from nationalist to Unionist (or vice versa) is exceedingly rare, and is regarded as much more fundamental than a mere shift in party-political allegiance. It is more of an existential metamorphosis. So how did I come to be standing today as a Unionist candidate in the Northern Irish elections?

My family were all Irish nationalists. My maternal grandfather, David Sheehy, sat in the House of Commons from 1885 to 1918 as a member of the Irish Parliamentary Party, pledged to Home Rule. For most of my life I did not challenge the basic nationalist assumptions. The change began for me with the start of the Provisional IRA's offensive in 1971. That autumn, I spoke at the annual conference of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union against the release of Republican prisoners. Motions proposing such releases had always been carried by acclamation, without debate. My intervention, followed by similar moves, marked me out as the most determined opponent in the politics of the Republic of the whole Sinn Féin-IRA programme. But I was still far from being a Unionist.

The next stage in my metamorphosis came three years later, over Sunningdale. I was a member of the Irish Government at the time, and an enthusiast for what I regarded as the core of Sunningdale: the cross-community executive, composed of Unionists and nationalists. But I saw, and told my colleagues, that this was endangered by Dublin's insistence on the salience of a Council of Ireland, the symbolic harbinger of a united Ireland. I warned that insisting on the council would endanger the already precarious position of our indispensable partners, the Faulkner Unionists. None of my Cabinet colleagues was impressed by this argument. I sensed that they didn't much care what happened to any kind of Unionists. And as I looked at all those polite, closed faces, I remembered that all my colleagues had had exclusively Catholic educations, whereas I had been at a school and university of Protestant ethos: Sandford Park School and Trinity College Dublin. I began to feel existentially isolated.

After the collapse of the Joint Executive — which was followed by the electoral elimination of all the Faulkner Unionists — I was asked by a reporter what I was doing to bring about a united Ireland. I said I was not working for a united Ireland. I soon became an active opponent of the whole nationalist plan for Northern Ireland. I had ceased to be a nationalist, but I was not yet a Unionist.

The first big step in that direction was when I accepted — about six years ago — an invitation from the late Ian Gow to address the Friends of

the Union at Westminster. I hesitated before accepting. When metamorphosis beckons, the prospect can be daunting. But a few months later when I heard that Ian Gow had been murdered by the IRA, I was glad that I had accepted.

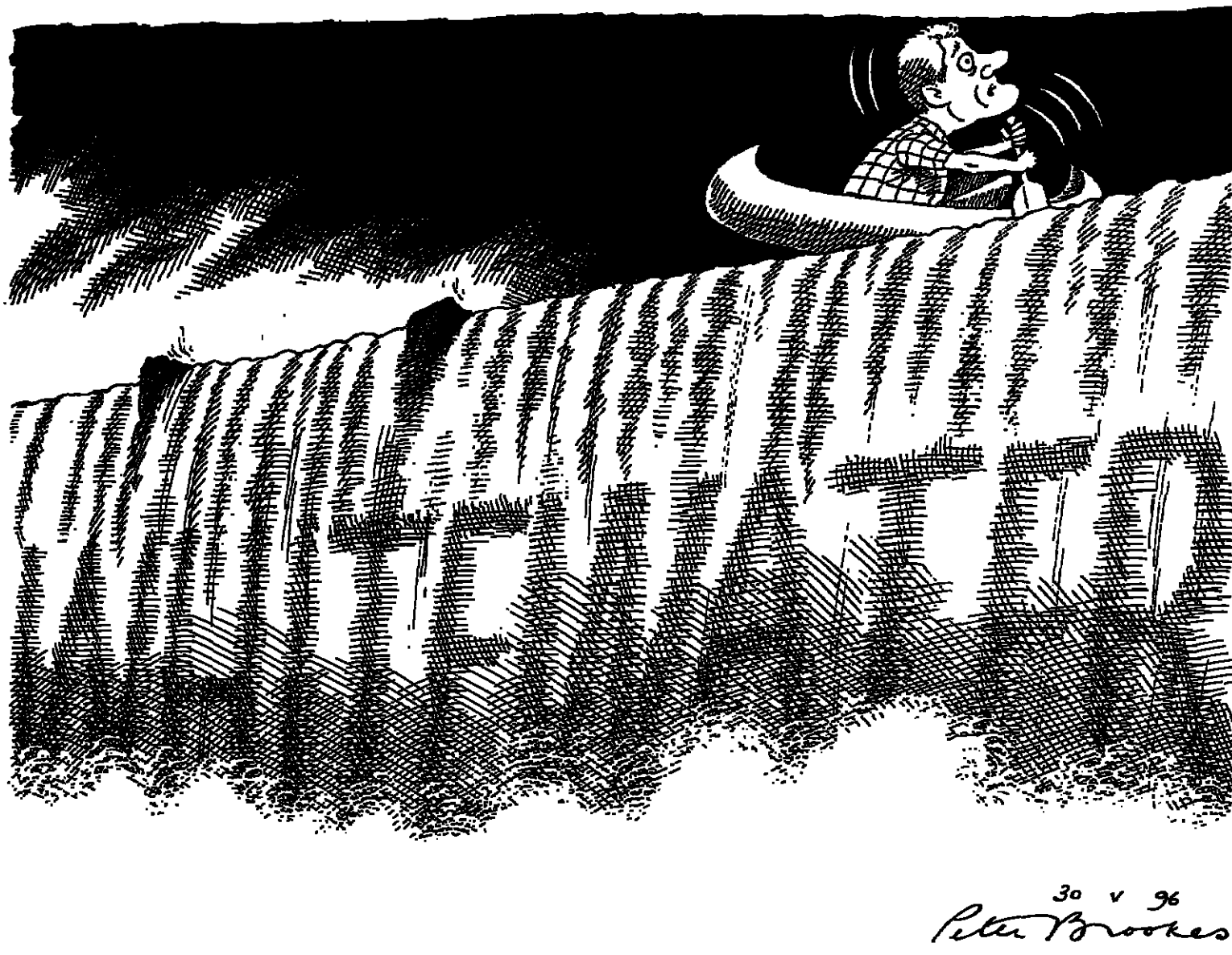
For a time I rather cherished what I now see as a frail distinction. I was a Friend of the Union, but not myself a Unionist. But by 1995, when Robert McCartney asked me to join what turned out to be his successful campaign in the Westminster by-election for North Down, I was beginning to get fed up with such distinctions, and had no trouble in accepting.

By this time I was thoroughly disgusted by the condition of Irish nationalism. The old distinction between constitutional nationalism and the physical-force kind has disappeared. Sinn Féin is at the centre of the Irish nationalist version of the peace process. All the nationalist leaders now parrot Sinn Féin'speak, mostly without realising quite what they're doing. The Irish Government's role in its negotiations with the British Government is that of a messenger for Sinn Féin. It sits down with Sinn Féin to prepare drafts to try to sell to the British. The process, supposedly dedicated to peace and reconciliation, is really all about screwing the Unionists. The officials concerned acknowledge this, although never publicly. This month it was revealed in the *Irish Independent* that the object of the negotiations is to induce John Major to say something that will infuriate the Unionists and "drive David Trimble wild".

The IRA is playing cat-and-mouse, having found that violence is most effective when intermittent, as this gives Sinn Féin more scope for blackmail. The objective is to destabilise Northern Ireland and precipitate conflict between loyalist paramilitaries and British troops, so bringing about British withdrawal. This would mean civil war engulfing all Ireland, which is what Sinn Féin-IRA wants. Meanwhile the constitutional nationalists fail to see where all this is leading.

So my metamorphosis was both inevitable and attractive. When Bob McCartney invited me to be a candidate for the United Kingdom Unionists, the party he founded and leads, I joyfully accepted. If, as now seems probable, the party finishes in the top ten, I shall have a seat in the new forum, and shall be an adviser to Bob McCartney in the all-party negotiations.

Metamorphosis is not always a pleasant experience. Kafka, for one, hardly recommends it. But it has made me feel younger, and I hope I shall be elected. We shall know the results tomorrow. If I do win a place in the new forum, I look forward to helping to frustrate Gerry Adams's version of the "peace process".



Is Clinton credible?

Americans are not being told the whole truth about the President

On Tuesday, in Little Rock, Arkansas, Kenneth Starr, the Whitewater special prosecutor, secured convictions on 24 charges of fraud, conspiracy and deceit against three close long-term associates of President Clinton. They were Jim Guy Tucker, until Tuesday Clinton's successor as the Democratic Governor of Arkansas, and James and Susan McDougal, Bill and Hillary Clinton's partners in the Whitewater land deal itself. The President testified by video at the trial, denying the claim of Judge Hale that as Governor he had improperly pressed him to make an illegal \$300,000 loan. The President's evidence was rejected by the prosecutor and the jury. David Hale is another old crony of Bill Clinton who appointed him to the bench; he too has been convicted.

That evening I watched the CBS News, read by Dan Rather. The Whitewater convictions ran only second; they were referred to in the opening headlines, but did not start to run in full until halfway through the programme. I remember from the early 1970s the press and television coverage of Watergate, when President Nixon was forced to resign. It is inconceivable that CBS would have handled a major development in that story in the same way. This week's convictions followed the guilty plea of Webb Hubbell, Hillary Clinton's partner in the Rose Law Firm. At least seven "friends of Bill" have now been convicted of serious crimes. Yet the CBS editors did not think the new convictions a big enough story to make their evening lead.

The Clinton character issue is complex and hard to follow, but America's establishment press has done a rotten job of investigating and reporting it. Serious allegations involving both Bill and Hillary extend back at least to the 1970s. They involve accusations of associations with criminals, fraud, corruption in political fundraising, tax offences, police and investigative cover-ups and the abuse of power, both when Clinton was Governor of Arkansas and since he has been President of the United States. They also involve Clinton's own sexual misdemeanours on an obsessive scale, and his evasiveness about them in public. Witnesses have died in mysterious circumstances and their deaths have not been properly investigated. The alleged criminal associations concern con-

victed fraudsters and drug-dealers. In trying to disentangle these issues, one can usefully start with some of the unexplained deaths. The most extraordinary is the "suicide" of Vincent Foster, the Deputy White House Counsellor who died in suspicious circumstances in July 1993. His body was found in Fort Marcy Park, just outside Washington. He was stated to have committed suicide there as a result of depression. The allegations are that either he did commit suicide but the body was moved, or that he was murdered.

There are many difficulties with the official suicide story. The body was laid out in what was immediately seen to be an artificial manner; the earlier history of the gun has never been traced; the bullet has never been found; there was too little blood; such bloodstains as there were suggested that the body had been moved; there were many still unidentified carpet fibres on his clothing, including his underwear; witnesses disagreed about the site and size of the exit wound; there was no local soil on the soles of his shoes; the inquiry did not follow normal procedures; evidence has been lost; witnesses were not contacted or were misreported; there were two cars and at least two unknown men reported at the scene but neither the cars nor the men have been identified.

The White House reaction to the death was very strange. There are two pieces of evidence that the death was known in the White House well before the time at which it is supposed to have been reported. Contrary to proper procedure, Foster's office was searched by White House staff. Some of his papers were removed. His briefcase was then searched and found to be empty. Subsequently it was re-examined and found to contain torn scraps of a "suicide note", itself subsequently stated by three handwriting experts to be a forgery. These problems in the evidence do not prove that Foster was murdered, but they cast unresolved doubts on the "suicide" story.

On the other hand, Gerry Parks

undoubtedly was murdered, in September 1993, in Little Rock; his murderer has never been found. He was shot from another car when driving home. Parks was the head of Clinton's campaign security team in the 1992 presidential election. His family believe he was murdered because he had kept an incriminating file on the President, which was subsequently stolen. There was a dispute about the payment of his bill for campaign services, and he may have tried to obtain payment by threatening blackmail.

Other suspicious deaths include the "suicide" of Kathy Ferguson (the ex-wife of the police officer who allegedly solicited Paula Jones), of Kathy's boyfriend, and of three black youths found dead in the region of Mena Airport. That was the airport used in the early 1980s by the subsequently murdered Barry Seal to fly arms to the Contras and cocaine into Arkansas. State trooper Brown has testified to Clinton's knowledge of the Mena activity.

The allegation is not that the President is some sort of a serial killer but that his network includes some dangerous and undesirable associates. He does not come from a respectable or, in American terms, normal world. His brother, his half-sister and, it is said, one of his stepfathers, have all served time for serious offences.

When Bill Clinton was Governor, the most serious allegations of corruption concerned the Arkansas Development Finance Agency, a honey-pot which was put through the Arkansas legislature on a bill drafted by Webb Hubbell himself, whose family was the first to take out a development loan. The ADFA allegations include large loans to cronies, the failure to record loans, payments which were outside the statute, and kickbacks to political funds. As Governor, Clinton had absolute control of ADFA, which raised a total of \$700 million in bonds, some of which were allegedly used for money-laundering.

Hillary Clinton is involved in a number of the allegations. She was herself a leading member of the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock, with the convicted Webb Hubbell and the dead Vincent Foster among her partners. Many documents from that firm have been shredded. She helped to set up the Whitewater company. As a lawyer she represented James McDougal's fraudulent Savings and Loan company. She even failed to claim a tax deduction for losses for tax, although she did remember to claim as a tax deduction Bill's used underpants, which he gave to a charity auction. Hillary supposedly turned \$1,000 into \$100,000 in commodity speculations set up by the lawyer for a wealthy Arkansas company. She lied about her role in Travelgate, when the Clintons used the law to dismiss seven innocent White House travel staff and replace them with cronies. She or her associates seem also to have concealed documents from investigators, which later turned up with her fingerprints on them.

One should not forget the dubious role of Dan Lasater, bond dealer, cocaine convict, employer and co-defendant with Roger Clinton, Bill's brother. When Dan Lasater went to jail he gave a full power of attorney to run his business to Patsy Thomasson, whom Bill Clinton subsequently appointed as the White House administrator, a post she still holds. She was one of the people who searched Vincent Foster's office.

The character issue also concerns Bill Clinton's sex life. Paula Jones is suing him for sexual harassment. He never came clean about his relationship with his long-term mistress Gennifer Flowers — the man in the flat next door to hers had his spleen ruptured when he was beaten up by some heavies who suspected him of having entry videos showing Bill visiting Gennifer. Arkansas policemen have claimed that they pimped for Clinton up to a hundred times.

These are only some of the character issues, but they show how wide the allegations go. In many cases there is suspicion: in many cases there is evidence on the record; in some cases there have already been convictions. Respectable journalists, of liberal views, living comfortably in New York, still do not want to tell the American public what the allegations are, or what the evidence is. So it is still entirely possible that Clinton will be re-elected in November.

Self-rule is not parochial

Magnus Linklater on Labour's grand design for Scotland

A momentary panic crossed the face of Brian Mawhinney as I approached him. He probably thought I was going to toss a pot of paint at him, whereas all I wanted to do was lodge a mild protest about the speech he had just made. In the course of a trenchant defence of the Union, the Conservative Party chairman had quoted from an article in *The Times* suggesting that not many people understood or were greatly interested in constitutional reform. He had, I thought, taken the paragraph in question out of context, and as its author I felt bound to remonstrate. He apologised but stuck to his guns. What followed was an enjoyable ding-dong about devolution and regionalism — much the same argument that Simon Jenkins and Matthew Parris have been waging in these columns recently.

Dr Mawhinney was saying that the constitutional changes Labour is contemplating, particularly the creation of a Scottish parliament, will end badly for all of us in the long run. They risk breaking up the United Kingdom, an arrangement which works perfectly well, and they will sour relations between the Scots and the English.

To reinforce this, Matthew Parris has tossed in some fairly contentious stuff about carping Scots and little Englishers, about the politics of the drenched fist and the outstretched palm. He sees devolution playing into the hands of the parochial and the small-minded. This is the kind of talk that whets the appetite for change among the Scots: at the very word parochial, the fiery cross is raised. If there is one thing they resent, it is English condescension.

But Parris's argument is one far rather than against the devolution of power. Part of the attraction of a parliament in Edinburgh is that it could give the Scots greater responsibility for their own affairs, so ending the constant displacement of blame to Westminster. This is the opposite of parochialism. As to the charge that people are not interested in devolution, all one can say is that north of the border it has been part of the political currency for the best part of 20 years. It may not be more urgent than unemployment or health, but a consistent majority has made it clear that it is wanted. To ignore that wish may itself induce a greater instability than the reform itself.

The argument that underlies what Mawhinney and Parris are saying is more contentious. It is that those who support reform do not understand its consequences, so it would be wrong to introduce it. This is dangerous territory — to suggest that Scottish voters are too dumb to understand the issue is to add the charge of ignorance to that of parochialism. Voters understand the broad thrust of policies perfectly well. They expect politicians to attend to the detail, and are not worried about the longer term because it usually takes care of itself.

Of course there are huge problems to resolve, and it is high time that Tony Blair acknowledged rather than ignored them. But it is inadequate to say that they are insuperable, and that the whole game should be abandoned because there is still no satisfactory answer to the "West Lothian question" (so-called after Tam Dalyell, MP for West Lothian, who argued in the 1970s debates on devolution that no parliament would ever tolerate Scottish MPs debating English issues if English MPs had no reciprocal rights).

It is also argued that a Labour government could never contemplate cutting back its Scottish representation in the Commons, because this would permanently remove its majority. The debate would be an endless parliamentary time, and the result would be resentment on both sides, with the only winners being the Nationalists waiting in the wings for the whole edifice to collapse.

There is a more robust response, which Labour and the Liberal Democrats should be far more resolute in commending. All the major constitutional changes in Scotland have been made — usually by Tory governments — in stages, in response to clear needs. Problems have been solved in a strictly pragmatic way, and by and large the reforms have worked. This present reform is bigger, but not impossible. The West Lothian question will be brushed aside for the first term of a Labour government while legislation is introduced; the Scottish representation in Westminster will be maintained, whatever the anomalies. Later on there will have to be some form of two-tier voting in the House, or a reduction in Scottish numbers. That in turn might lead eventually to some form of federal system. This may cause palpitations now, but who is to say what a future generation will make of it? Personally, I would support the tartan tax, because that is what will give a Scottish parliament real teeth, but in the end it is a matter for the voter.

I would certainly not be put off the grand design of a constitutional change that is in tune with much of what is happening in Europe and is clearly wanted by the Scottish people simply because it might irritate some English backbenchers. That is the politics of the whim.

Fantasy football

TOO much philosophy is behind the desperate indecision of the Football Association, now being manifested in its flustering about how to deal with Paul Gascoigne's mid-air rampage. Evidence comes this Saturday, only a week before the European Championship. Graham Kelly, the FA's pudding-faced chief executive will be appearing at the Royal Festival Hall to participate in Philosophy Football Europe United Day.

This preposterous event begins with Kelly, Rick Parry (chief executive of the Premier League) and Gordon Taylor (head of the players' union) discussing the philosophy of football with fans. A debate will then follow on the role literature can play in football — poems and the penalty kick, that sort of thing. The day will then climax with a four-a-side tournament to be held in the Festival Hall foyer.

Kelly, like Vladimir Nabokov and Pope John Paul II before him, will play in goal. He has promised to wear a shirt bearing the face of another great goalie, Albert Camus, while others will be sporting Wittenstein and, bafflingly, Oscar Wilde.

"I think Kelly is going in goal in case anyone tries to tackle him," says Konrad Caulkett, one of the organisers. "None of the England team are invited. I hope they will be in training."

● Frantic rewriting has been going on for the BBC's Poisoned Chalice programme, which tells the story of Britain's uneasy relationship with



● Potential buyers of the Earl and Countess of Wiltton's 18th-century vicarage in Essex have been intrigued by the staircase, which slopes sharply into the wall. "The

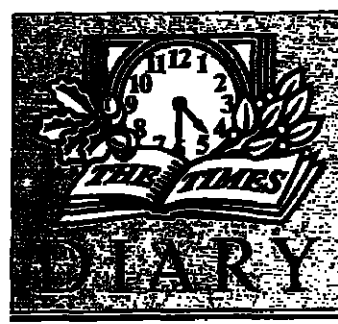
the EEC and EU. Since the Government's decision to use its blackball, Michael Elliott, the Editor of Newsweek and writer of the programme, has been desperately changing the ending to the final episode, to be aired tonight. The pay-off line had been John Major saying "The price of our place in Europe is incalculable" — but no one quite knows what he meant.

Spell it out

NO WONDER Tony Blair decided not to send his son to a school in his home borough of Islington. In recent weeks, Islington council's education department has been sending out reams of faxes trumpeting its achievements under the heading "From Islington Education".

"It's a basic programming problem," is how a council spokesman explains the misspelling. "We have had a word with the machine's administrator, and he is being sent for a half-term intensive spelling course." Not, one hopes, in one of Islington's schools.

● Potential buyers of the Earl and Countess of Wiltton's 18th-century vicarage in Essex have been intrigued by the staircase, which slopes sharply into the wall. "The



wool merchant who built the house and his family all drank a lot," explains the Countess. "Every night they would stagger upstairs clinging to the wall, and after so many years the stairs just began to slope in."

Eton fives?

SNOOZING gently beneath a tree on Agar's Plough at Eton's Fourth of June yesterday was a tubby vicar. For four ink-fingered Etonians, however, he and the ivory-topped cane which lay behind him were irresistible prey.

Fueled by a Range Rover full of Pimm's, they skulked up behind him, and before he could rise from his celestial reveries, they grabbed his cane and legged it. They whizzed past the swooning blondes crowding around the

Earl of Mornington, grandson of the Duke of Wellington, Captain of the Oppidians and teenage Apollo. Several members of Pop rocked tipsily on their New & Lingwood heels.

Enter one willowy mother. Straw hat akimbo, she strayed into the path of the oncoming miscreants. They way blocked, they dropped their prize and scurpered. Peering over her glasses, she bent down like a drugged giraffe to examine the cane. At ground level, she was joined by the huffing vicar. "I cursed the urchins," said the vicar, "and all this woman did was say 'Loopy Loo', ask me for a cigarette and lope off for another drink."

Fruity number

CATHOLICISM is a serious business in Nereto in central Italy, where the fearsome Father Silvio De Gregoris has taken to thrusting apples at any women who dare to come to Mass in a mini-skirt. Last Sunday, as his altar-boys brandished the fruit at the culprits, he spoke indignantly of Adam and Eve and original sin. Eyelashes fluttered, and rising hemlines were wriggled back down.

By taking such a firm line on these things, Father De Gregoris, who would need a whole orchard



The Queen of Belgium: told to cover her knees

for High Mass at the Brighton Oratory, is raising the spectre of the great hemlines scandal of 1969. Then, to the gasps of Europe's Catholic aristocracy, the Vatican barred entry to the Queen of Belgium, the Italian-born Donna Paola Ruffo di Calabria. She was told to go away and put on a skirt which covered her knees.

P-H-S

Big business and

WEEK



TEST OF NERVE

Major must be patient and fight on

Each side in the beef dispute is testing the other's resolve. Yesterday, Jacques Santer, President of the Commission, deliberately chose to publicise an outburst against this country that he had made in a private meeting; Emma Bonino, Fisheries Commissioner, announced plans for a 40 per cent reduction in the national trawler fleet; other Commission officials announced discriminatory compensation terms for British cattle and gave the Ministry of Agriculture just one day to reveal details about possible contamination of baby milk. The Government meanwhile continues its campaign to obstruct European Union administration and policy initiatives.

It is important that John Major, having chosen this ground on which to highlight his impatience with European ambitions, should keep his nerve and hold his ground. He cannot expect instant approbation among voters to match the enthusiasm of his political and press support. Success must be judged in weeks rather than days.

Our MORI poll today, the first of voting intentions since the new stance was adopted, shows that so far Tory support has slipped slightly and that dissatisfaction with both the Government and the Prime Minister has grown. This has to be set beside Tuesday's NOP poll, showing 54 per cent supporting non-cooperation with only 33 per cent against. If the policy itself is popular, the government has not yet gained credit for it.

Perhaps the public is reluctant to back this Government however sensible its policies are. Some voters may be concentrating only on the beef issue itself: as we have argued in the past, this is hardly the perfect ground on which to do battle. Others may be sceptical — not without reason — of the Government's will to follow the policy through. But each day that passes and each decision that British ministers prevent from passing, should contribute to the Prime Minister's credibility and show supporters who may

doubt him that their doubts are wrong.

Yesterday's attempt by European officials to discomfort Britain ought to harden public opinion in favour of Mr Major. Brussels clearly sees this as a fightback. But the more aggressive the Commission becomes, the harder it will be for Mr Major to climb down. If he is lucky, popular opinion will soon become infuriated with the Commission and swing behind him. If he is unlucky, unsupported, or simply incredible, his latest chance to rescue his political future will fail.

Support at home is crucial. If he wants to move to further stages in his redefinition of Britain's relations with the EU, he will almost certainly have to demonstrate the success of the policy at the polls. Enthusiastic integrationists, such as Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine, were swung behind the non-cooperation policy because they saw its political attractions. Although they are both men who see a long and mainly economic path to the polling booths, neither would turn away a chance of boosting their party's popularity.

Mr Clarke gives notice in our interview with him today that he would prefer the non-cooperation to be ended as soon as possible, ideally before Florence. He is utterly against the demands being extended to include, say, repatriation of powers from Brussels. If the Prime Minister does indeed intend to widen his aims, he will run into opposition from his Chancellor and, possibly, his deputy, unless he can prove that he has read the national mood better than they have.

This policy was supposed to fire up the Tories in the polls so that they might have a chance of holding an early general election in the autumn. It was for that reason, as well as pressure from farming voters, that many on the European wing of the party came out in its support. But if our poll is an early portent of others to come, the new-found unity will soon evaporate. Then the chances of an early election will vanish too.

THE CREDIBILITY CHASM

Whitewater and Clinton's conduct elevate character issues

As Bob Dole prepares to leave the Senate next month he faces bad and good news on his electoral prospects. The bad is the consensus that the November contest is Bill Clinton's to lose. The good is that recent events suggest this is what he might do.

The verdicts delivered by the Whitewater jury indicate, at a minimum, that the presidential testimony was not found fully compelling. Had the three defendants been acquitted, the White House would have claimed vindication.

Whitewater, however, is but one factor that raised doubts about the President. The extraordinary claim from his lawyers that the sexual harassment suit against him should be deferred, because as Commander-in-Chief he was protected under the Soldiers and Sailors Relief Act 1940, has provoked the reaction it deserved. Republican commercials have ridiculed the notion while outraged veterans' organisations have demanded an apology. The White House has retreated but not retracted on the matter. The profile, both of reports on Mr Clinton's private life and his failure to serve in the Vietnam War has thus been raised.

This concerted barrage of criticism would matter less if the President's political actions offered some sort of repudiation to a set of essentially personal accusations. Instead they reinforce it. In the last month he has embraced a conservative welfare reform plan elements of which he had already vetoed twice, abandoned the homosexual lobby — long amongst his most loyal — on the issue of same-sex marriages, and co-opted a Republican proposal to offer tax credits for adoptions, in which he had shown

no previous interest. The First Lady compounded this volte-face with her sudden interest in a second little Clinton.

More orthodox Democrats have been rather uneasy about this willingness to trade policy positions for popularity. Their concerns extend to personnel matters. In 1993 the President reached for the Republican media operative, David Gergen, to reorganise his faltering Administration. The next year he appointed Robert Bennett, brother of former Republican Cabinet officer William Bennett, to be his personal lawyer, although he may now be regretting that move. By 1995 he had found a new pollster, Dick Morris, whose previous clients were invariably Republican. As one liberal commentator has noted, Mr Clinton appears happy to appease the right wing because all that seemingly matters is his residence of the White House west wing.

Character issues are always an element in presidential elections. That is quite proper given that the role is part symbolic head of state as well as head of government. Many Democrats were willing to ask questions about Ronald Reagan's qualities for office. Nonetheless, it is the Clinton character which will come under scrutiny.

Some thirty years ago Lyndon Johnson's evasions over the direction of the Vietnam conflict brought the phrase "credibility gap" into the American political lexicon. Under Bill Clinton — another Southern Democrat with a probity problem — that gap has widened to a chasm. The electorate will decide what weight to give it.

WEEK OF THE TIGER

Big business and deep pockets could save the big cats

Powerful and threatening, the rising economies of the East have become known as the Asian tigers. Meanwhile the beasts whose qualities of ferocity and grace these states embody are themselves threatened by economic development. Across Asia the numbers of tigers are dwindling. The five different sub-species which still survive could be extinct by the end of the century. In an effort to safeguard the remaining population of the world's biggest cats the Federation of Zoos has nominated this week to be Tiger Week. It is appealing for money to help conservation and deserves the support of all who cherish the wild.

In antiquity the tiger roamed across Asia from the Caspian to the easternmost Indies and the steppes. A fixture across that continent, the tiger entered Europe as a byword for brutality after Alexander the Great encountered it. Virgil had Dido accuse deserting Aeneas of the callousness of a man sucked by a Hyrcanian tiger. Chaucer's squire believed there was "noone so cruel beast" as the tygre. Since then the tiger's image has changed, magnificent still but inspiring wonder and even affection as well as fear. Through the sublimity of Blake's *Tiger*, *The Jungle Book* and the lithe creature of the Esso advertisements the tiger has kept its grip on the British imagination.

It has not, however, maintained its hold in its native home. There were more than 100,000 tigers at the turn of the century; now there are fewer than 5,000. Numbers are still declining. Evidence suggests that nearly

1,000 tigers have been killed in northern India in the past three years. Losses at that rate could see the number of beasts drop below sustainable levels very shortly.

Apparent reasons for the decline are various. Logging in Sumatra and Siberia to feed economic growth has reduced the tigers' habitat and made poaching easier. There are similar pressures to develop land in India. Among the newly wealthy nations of the East there is a distinctly old-fashioned demand for tiger skin and body parts to be used in oriental medicine. A Chinese pharmacopoeia of 1597 still in use today prescribes tiger brain mixed with oil as an embrocation to cure sloth and skin trouble. Demand for dead tiger is such that an average adult carcass can be stripped and all its parts sold for some \$35,000.

To help preserve the tigers, money must be raised to protect their habitat and stop the poachers. Esso, which has ridden to commercial success on the tiger's back, is contributing handsomely to Tiger Week. Its parent company has spent \$5 million on tiger conservation already. But more is needed, to equip an anti-poaching team in Siberia, provide rangers in India, research in Sumatra and support the breeding of tigers in captivity. Critics want every penny spent in the wild, but given the threat to the species it seems wise to ensure that, at the very least, some survive even if behind bars. One day, perhaps, when the causes of their decline are reversed tigers born in Regent's Park may reclaim the jungle crown.

Top brass salvo on Forces pensions

From Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton and others

Sir, Ugly rumours have come to our ears that the Government is hoping to economise on pensions for the Armed Forces and their dependants in a new Armed Forces pensions scheme, which the Ministry of Defence is devising in the light of both an in-house review and the Bett report on conditions of service (report, May 2).

Whether or not this is true, we urge that any new scheme should be opened to discussion in Parliament and public before it is finalised.

We are particularly concerned that the opportunity of its introduction should be taken to remedy certain injustices of the current scheme as it applies to the past. They are:

1. Whereas widows of servicemen who retired in and after 1973 can receive a pension of half the rate of their late husband's pension, those whose husbands retired before then receive only a one-third rate pension;
2. Anomalies arising out of pay-freeses, especially in 1976/77, whereby those retiring in certain years receive a smaller pension than those who retired earlier, should be remedied;
3. The widows of post-retirement marriages, whose husbands retired before 1978, should qualify for a pension to bring them into line with those whose husbands retired thereafter.

Two of these injustices would have been remedied last year by the proposed amendments to the Pensions Bill in the House of Lords which, on the Government's advice, were rejected by the House of Commons.

We also draw attention to the fact that, although a serviceman's pay is "abated" as a notional contribution to his pension scheme, he receives no immediate benefit from it unless he serves to pensionable age, which many do not. This is particularly hard on those in the ranks, few of whom serve for 22 years to qualify for an immediate pension. In any event, the compulsory abatement of a serviceman's pay must be acknowledged as the serviceman's contribution to a future pension.

Any new pension scheme must recognise the unique character of the Armed Forces, which cannot be equated, as the Treasury argues, with other public services. The new scheme must recognise the special requirement to provide for compulsory early retirement in order to ensure that our serving sailors, soldiers and airmen are young and fighting fit.

Yours faithfully,
HILL-NORTON
(Chief of Defence Staff, 1971-73),
CARVER
(Chief of Defence Staff, 1973-76),
LEWIN
(Chief of Defence Staff, 1979-82),
BRAMALL
(Chief of Defence Staff, 1982-85),
CRAIG
(Chief of Defence Staff, 1988-91),
House of Lords,
May 29.

Witness support

From the President of the British Psychological Society

Sir, While I am in complete agreement with Ruth Pitter (letter, May 21) about the useful training provided by the Crown Court witness service, there is one category of witness who I believe does require specific training.

Evidence of expert witnesses is often vital to the outcome of due process. Therefore, how evidence is prepared and delivered, as well as how questions are answered and how cross-examination is handled, are crucial issues. These matters can and need to be covered in training courses, especially for the expert who is giving evidence for the first time.

The British Psychological Society has developed such a training package, under the title of "Expert testimony: developing witness skills".

Yours faithfully,
MARGARET McALLISTER,
President,
The British Psychological Society,
St Andrews House,
48 Princes Road East,
Leicester,
May 21.

Student loans

From Mr Colin Ward

Sir, Far from being on the verge of collapse because graduates have been unable to repay their student loans, as you report (earlier editions, May 21), the Student Loan Company is continuing to expand and improve the service we offer our customers.

The regulations governing the student loans scheme include provisions enabling any borrower whose income is less than 85 per cent of average earnings (currently some £15,200) to defer their repayments. The vast majority of borrowers who are due to make repayments are doing so: as at March 31 this year this company had collected over 94 per cent of all monies due.

We are currently administering over 12 million accounts and have paid out over 500,000 loans so far this academic year.

Yours faithfully,
COLIN WARD
(Chief Executive),
Student Loans Company Limited,
100 Bothwell Street, Glasgow 2,
May 23.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Prejudice, fear and ignorance that exacerbate beef crisis

From Mrs Edwina Currie, MP for Derbyshire South (Conservative)

Sir, Two aspects of the Prime Minister's new approach towards Europe deserve our support. One is his sending of various ministers to the capitals of Europe to explain our case for the removal of the beef ban. The other is his decision to take that ban to the European Court of Justice to have it ruled illegal.

He has a strong argument under Single Market rules. Other countries have no more right to protect their own commercial interest by refusing our exports of food than they have to stop trade in cars or soap. Their fearful reactions, we can point out, are causing great damage to their domestic farming industries. We are all in this together.

It is odd, therefore, that such admirable and sensible actions are in direct conflict with the Government's stated policy of non-cooperation. Moreover, by seeking the help of the European Court, ministers are acknowledging its importance. The enhancement of the court's powers in the Maastricht treaty resulted from direct pressure from John Major: so why now allow the Home Secretary to demand "their repatriation"? It doesn't make sense.

Incidentally, what a good thing these issues are decided in Europe by majority voting. Were votes in play we would never get the ban lifted. Has anybody in Whitehall thought of that, when the veto is held up as the best way to protect British interests?

Confused? You bet. So are my Derbyshire farmers. And, it appears, Mr Blair. But so are many Tories who deplore the outrageous attacks on the European Union when the causes and cure of the beef problem are closer to home. Particularly when they emanate from a Government whose leader proudly proclaimed on taking office that our country's place was at the very heart of Europe.

Yours faithfully,
EDWINA CURRIE,
House of Commons,
May 28.

From Mr Christopher Booker

Sir, Your report (earlier editions, May 29) the fear of environmental health officials that "unscrupulous farmers" may exploit a "loophole in the hygiene regulations" to sell "contaminated meat" from cattle over 30 months old.

What a telling instance this is of the way the BSE madness compounds itself. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health has no grounds whatever for describing such meat as

"contaminated". Back in March the Government's Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee merely recommended that, to be on the safe side, meat from cattle over 30 months should be deboned before it was sold. At the time ministers emphasised that such meat was perfectly safe to eat, and this was confirmed by the World Health Organisation.

But then those same ministers quite arbitrarily decided that all such cattle should be destroyed, not for health reasons but as a measure to "restore consumer confidence", not least with the European Community. And so subtly does one half-baked assumption slide into the next that two months later supposedly responsible health officials can cheerfully describe all such meat as "contaminated". How can we ever escape from this self-reinforcing cycle of lunacy?

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER BOOKER,
The Old Rectory, Litton, Bath,
May 28.

From Mr M. J. Copley

Sir, Perhaps John Major recalls that in 1965 President Charles de Gaulle successfully used the tactic of withdrawing French co-operation from the EEC over an issue he considered to be of vital national interest. The Prime Minister may also have noted that less than a year after the "crisis of the empty chair" de Gaulle was re-elected for a new term in office. Another precedent?

Yours faithfully,
M. J. COPLEY,
31 The Cricketers,
Kirkstall Lane,
Leeds, West Yorkshire,
May 25.

From Mr S. P. Hodson Pressinger

Sir, Our Government surely must take a closer account of international opinion on the eradication of BSE. In its apparent insensitivity to foreign consumers' genuine fears and in its failure to approve additional measures to remove BSE from the food chain it undermines both the force of scientific logic and its own legal case in winning back global confidence in British beef.

Yours faithfully,
SELWYN HODSON PRESSINGER,
4 Lyall Street, SW1,
May 28.

From Mr Neil Datson

Sir, BSE is predominantly a British problem. But Mr John Murray and

your other correspondents of May 25 might ask why it is so predominantly a British problem. Simply, because the UK is the only country in the EU that is looking for it. Switzerland, whose control measures mirror those of the UK, has found 211 cases; more than the whole of the EU except Britain. How strange.

Yours faithfully,
NEIL DATSON,
Glebe Farm, Speisbury, Oxford,
May 29.

From Professor Emeritus S. John Pirt

Sir, William Rees-Mogg has done us a service by attending the Royal Society of Medicine meeting on BSE and writing a valuable account of it (article, May 20). The aspect which concerns me, as a microbiologist, is the sparsity of knowledge about BSE.

The outstanding fact is that we do not yet know what is the disease agent, and until we do there seems little hope that the crisis will go away. Clearly the efforts made so far to identify the agent have not been commensurate with the size of the problem. This is not surprising, given the Government's commitment to cut back on scientific research as much as possible.

Much more could be done to accelerate research into BSE. It should be possible to find ways and means, probably using a tissue-culture system in place of animals, to reduce the time required for infection tests to weeks or days instead of years.

To target the causative agent of BSE, I advocate the formation of a task force of about 200 scientists and technicians to supplement the small isolated groups now at work on the problem. Given enlightened leadership, the task force ought to solve the problem in two to three years. That would cost only about £10 million per year, a trivial amount compared with the cost of BSE. However, I would also add a further £10 million to be paid out, tax free, to all members of the task force, in proportion to the income they derive from it. If they reach their target within three years, what is sauce for, say, the merchant banker, is sauce for the scientist.

Once the causative agent has been discovered, the necessary means to identify the limits to the disease and bring it under control should be rapidly found.

Yours faithfully,
S. JOHN PIRT
(Emeritus Professor of Microbiology),
25 The Street, Brecon, Powys,
May 21.

British Library science

From the Chief Executive of the British Library

Sir, Mr Richard Gallafent's proposal (letter, May 21) for the return of most of the British Library's science holdings to the Department of Trade and Industry, in order to relieve pressure on our new building in St Pancras, would exacerbate the BL's resource problem.

Not only would an alternative host institution have to find massive start-up costs, but significant economies of scale — for cataloguing, acquisitions and storage, for example — would be lost.

It is true that we worry about readers' space at St Pancras. Broadly speaking, over the past five years demand on reader spaces in our existing London reading rooms has increased by 9 per cent. But demand for services which do not necessitate visiting our buildings, such as document supply, bibliographic reference and business information, has grown by 18 per cent. We expect that divergent trend to continue.

As far as patents are concerned, in which Mr Gallafent has a specific interest, over 2.5 million current patents are now stored in Southampton Buildings, Holborn, on CD-Rom. These

can be accessed conveniently without having to visit the building.

The BL plays a critical role in supporting the British economy, its educational capacity and its cultural enrichment, in part because of the wide-ranging nature of its collections. Having off science and technology from the British Library would do great harm to the provision of information in this country for business, science and industry.

The move to St Pancras will allow us to bring together in one highly automated building most of those disparate collections and services now spread across London, and will enable us to provide the service which UK industry will need in the 21st century.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN LANG,
Chief Executive,
The British Library,
96 Euston Road, NW1,
May 23.

From Mr Stephen Bartlett

Sir, Mr Gallafent's proposal that the British Library's science holdings should stay put in Southampton Buildings, Holborn, whether or not under the aegis of the DTI, must have caused many regular users (like myself) to drop their breakfast toast (but-

ter-side down), faint with horror. I trust that it will go no further.

Firstly, not all the library's science holdings are housed at Holborn: biomedical and other subjects are kept at the Aldwych reading room. The subject split — eg, chemistry (Holborn) and biochemistry (Aldwych) — is unavoidably arbitrary, forcing many of us to oscillate between the two with great frequency (like delocalised electrons). Merely bringing these under one roof in the new building at St Pancras will constitute a devoutly hoped-for improvement in working efficiency.

Secondly, both the Holborn and Aldwych premises are extremely uncomfortable, particularly the basement at Holborn, which houses the business collection. Surely Mr Gallafent does not wish to deny both readers and staff the enormous improvement in this respect that any new building must offer?

No, onwards to St Pancras, please, as quickly as possible — even if we have to stand while reading. Surely a few pencils could be spared to purchase a lectern or two?

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN BARTLETT,
6 Royston Court, Lichfield Road,
Kew Gardens, Surrey,
May 21.

Bitter bit

From Mr Malcolm Ginsberg

Sir, Harvey Elliott's interesting article, "Does air travel have a future?" (Travel, May 23), highlights the influence of the small, highly articulate anti-airport lobby. Can I make a practical suggestion: let the airlines draw up a blacklist of those who are opposed to airports. Upon checking in for their next holiday flight an alarm would function on the computer and the passenger would be informed that, as they were opposed to airport development, the airline was refusing them travel.

Yours etc,
MALCOLM GINSBERG (Editor),
Flight International Directories,
PO Box 1315,
Potters Bar, Hertfordshire,
May 23.

Fortunes of war

From Professor James S. Harrison

Sir, So, it is "hard cheese" (letter, May 25) that Napoleon got bogged down in the mud at Waterloo. Or, as Mareschal Bosquet nearly said on a later occasion: "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas Grévyère."

Yours faithfully,
JAMES S. HARRISON,
Hendon Lawn, Cudnall Street,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire,
May 25.

Activists and Blair

From the Chair of Labour Reform

Sir, Your report of May 24, headed "Authoritarian Blair angers Labour activists", reflected many of the concerns of our members. However, to state that "activists have clashed with Tony Blair" misrepresents Labour Reform, a network always careful to avoid personality politics.

We are promoting a thoughtful and considered debate on policy mechanisms and party structures. Our sole aim is to ensure that Labour enters the next century as a party for the many, not just for the few, firmly rooted in the community and committed to ensuring that all its members have a genuine stake in its future.

Our members, both from the Left and from the Right, are in the mainstream of the party. Our main aim at present is the return of a Labour Government at the next election and to see Tony Blair installed as Prime Minister. Far from opposing Mr Blair, we will all be working hard to achieve the Labour victory which we believe to be crucial for the future of this country.

Yours sincerely,
ALEXANDRA SCOTT,
Lea Bank, Tredington,
Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire,
May 22.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Road signs

From Mrs Alexandra Scott

Sir, Today a lorry driver blew me a kiss as I let him out at a busy junction. I am now confused. Was this motorist in a bad mood or was he just being friendly?

Yours sincerely,
ALEXANDRA SCOTT,
Lea Bank, Tredington,
Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire,
May 22.

Sounds right

From Mr George Chandler

Sir, Mr John Rowe Townsend (letter, May 16) will be pleased to learn that, in the shires, popular recognition of some hitherto-neglected musicians is growing.

Amongst the audience at a recent musical concert, according to our local weekly the *Reading Chronicle*, was the celebrated guest Lady Barbara Oily.

Yours sincerely,
GEORGE CHANDLER,
52 Chazey Road,
Caversham,
Reading, Berkshire,
May 16.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
May 28: The Princess Royal today visited Aberdeen and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City of Aberdeen (Mrs Margaret Farquhar, the Lord Provost).

Her Royal Highness this morning opened Kvaerner National Limited, Howness Terrace, Kirkhill Industrial Estate, Dyce. The Princess Royal this afternoon visited BPB Davidson, Mugginess Mills, Bucksburn. Her Royal Highness, Patron, Scottish Institute of Sports Medicine and Sports Science, later chaired the second meeting of the Advisory Council of the Institute at the University of Aberdeen, Old Aberdeen Campus.

The Princess Royal, Patron, Victim Support Scotland, afterwards visited the Aberdeen Victim Support Scheme at 4 Albany Place. **BUCKINGHAM PALACE**
May 29: Sir Cuthbert Sebastian was received in audience by The Queen upon his appointment as Governor-General of St Kitts and Nevis.

The Queen, Colonel-in-Chief, received Colonel Donald Dewick (Honorary Colonel, Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps).

Mrs Penwick was also received by Her Majesty.

Mr Robert Gieve (President, the Royal Warrant Holders Association) was received by Her Majesty and presented a gift to Her Majesty on the occasion of her Seventieth Birthday.

Mrs Margaret Barbour (Past President, Mr Samuel Twining (Honorary Treasurer) and Colonel Christopher Pickup (Secretary) were present.

The Queen received Fellows participating in the Commonwealth Foundation Fellowship Scheme to promote Commonwealth Understanding.

Dr Humayun Khan (Director of the Commonwealth Foundation) was present.

Her Majesty, Patron, this evening attended a Reception given by the Royal School of Church Music at St James's Palace and was received by the Director (Mr Harry Bramma).

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
May 29: The Duke of York today visited York to mark the Six Hundredth Anniversary of granting of the first Charter and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of North Yorkshire (Sir Marcus Worsley, Bt).

His Royal Highness this morning visited an exhibition of local enterprise in the Guildhall.

The Duke of York afterwards opened the new One-Step community centre.

His Royal Highness this afternoon attended a Luncheon at the Assembly Rooms.

The Duke of York later visited the urban regeneration project at Bell Farm Housing Estate.

His Royal Highness this evening attended a Dinner in Merchant Adventurers' Hall.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
May 29: The Princess Royal, President, Royal Agricultural Society of England, today attended the President's Day at the Moredun Foundation, Pentlands Science Park, Penicuik, Midlothian.

Her Royal Highness this evening opened the display by Henry Poole and Company in the Textile and Dress Department, Victoria and Albert Museum, London SW7.

KENSINGTON PALACE
May 29: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon this afternoon visited the Horse Rangers Association at their Headquarters, The Royal Mews, Hampton Court Palace.

Royal engagements

The Queen will give a reception at Buckingham Palace at 6.30 to mark the 1996 quinquennial conference of the Royal Life Saving Society.

The Princess Royal, as Chancellor of London University, will open a new library at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, Hammersmith Hospital, at 10.20, will unveil a commemorative plaque to Dame Anna Neagle and Herbert Wilcox at Aldford House, Park Lane, at noon; will attend a reception at Grosvenor House Hotel at 12.10; as President of Baha, will attend the Carl and Eva Foreman awards luncheon at 1.05 Piccadilly at 12.45; as President of the Animal Health Trust, will attend an industry committee meeting for the first launch of a corporate membership scheme at Buckingham Palace at 3.00. Later, as President of the Rural Housing Trust, she will attend an evening reception at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors at 6.30 to mark their twenty first anniversary.

Princess Margaret, as President of the Friends of the Elderly and Gentefolk's Help, will visit the society's home, Redcot, Haslemere, at 2.30.

The Duke of Gloucester will visit the Royal and West of England Society's annual show, at the showground, Shepton Mallet, at 10.30.

Luncheon
Carlton Club Political Committee
Mr David Mellor, QC, MP, was the guest of honour and speaker at a luncheon of the Carlton Club Political Committee held yesterday at the club. Sir Brian Gosnell, chairman of the committee, presided. Mr Oliver Pawle also spoke.

Oxford University

Merton College
Promotion
To an Exhibition: Miss A.L. Goodman, formerly of Manchester Girls' High School.

Birthdays today

Mr W.P. Cleland, thoracic surgeon, 34; Mr Ray Conney, theatrical producer, 84; Mr Harry Enfield, writer, actor and comedian, 35; Mr Andrew Farrell, rugby league player, 21; the Right Rev J.W. Gladwin, Bishop of Guildford, 54; Mr Richard Hannam, racehorse trainer, 51; Air Marshal Sir Reginald Harland, 76; Sir David Knox, 78; Mr Barry Legg, MP, 47; Mr Timothy Lewellyn, director, Henry Moore Foundation, 49; Sir Ian Lloyd, former MP, 75; Dr John Marks, former chairman, British Medical Association, 71; Dr

R.G.G. Mercer, headmaster, Stonyhurst College, 47; Mr A.R. Moore, diplomat, 78; Mr Colin Myler, managing director, *Quality Mirror*, 44; Sir Duncan Nichol, former chief executive, National Health Service Management Executive, 55; Lord Richard, QC, 64; Professor John Richmond, former President, Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, 70; Mr Rowland Sanders, lawyer, 100; Mr Tom Waterston, bookseller, 57; Mr Philip Whitehead, MEP, 59; Mr Bob Willis, cricketer, 47; Sir Frederick Wood, honorary life president, Croda International, 70.



The sculptor Vivien Mallock with Major-General Peter Martin, president of the Normandy Veterans Association, at the Imperial War Museum yesterday in front of a tank used by Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery of Alamein ("Monty"), commander of Allied Land Forces in the liberation of Normandy. They were announcing that Prince Michael of Kent is to unveil a statue of Monty by Mrs Mallock in Normandy on June 6, the 52nd anniversary of D-Day, at the small town of Colleville-Montgomery. The town changed its name in 1946 in honour of Monty

Lloyd of Kilgerran Prize 1996

Foundation for Science and Technology
Professor Sir William Stewart and Dr W. Graham Richards are the winners of the 1996 Lloyd of Kilgerran Prize for the Foundation for Science and Technology, which is, unusually, awarding two prizes this year. Professor Stewart was the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser and was especially recommended for the prize for his work introducing the Technology Foresight Programme. Dr Richards, of the Physical and Theoretical Chemistry Laboratory, Oxford University, is a pioneer of computer-aided molecular design. The prize of £2,000 is awarded annually to commemorate the late Lord Lloyd of Kilgerran, first President of the Foundation for Science and Technology.

Latest wills

Professor Elyn John Richards, of Romsey, Hampshire, aeronautical engineer, Vice-Chancellor of Loughborough University 1987-73, left estate valued at £10,923 net. Mr Reginald Harold Blofeld, of Chesham, Hertfordshire, left estate valued at £4,310.43 net. Dorothy Isobel Thomson, of Southbourne, Bournemouth, Dorset, left estate valued at £2,457.13 net. She left a number of personal bequests, and the residue equally between the NSPC, Spastics Society, LCP, the Royal Cancer Research Campaign, Save the Children Fund and the RNIB. Other estates include, net before tax: Mr William Andrew Gordon Cumming, of Farnham, Surrey £639,445; Mr Henry James Holloway, of Church Brampton, Northamptonshire £952,819; Mrs Mary Violet King, of Thornton Heath, Surrey £510,414; Mr John Mather Morfitt, of Wolverhampton, West Midlands £654,909; Mr Patrick Evelyn Nesbitt, of Epsom, Surrey £902,211; Mr Hugh Herbert Rose, of London SW3 £2,799,524; Mr William Thomas Rowland, of Long Wharton, Leicestershire £748,435; Ethel Marion Vokins, of Brighton, East Sussex £703,249; Miriam Gwyneth Wallis, of Bodmin, Cornwall £653,148.

University news

King's College London

Recent grants include:

School of Humanities

Professor J. B. Thomas 296,000 Ecu (European Commission) to support a research project entitled *Control of the immune system in the development of AIDS*.

Professor P. G. Jenner, 400,000 (National Parkinson Foundation) to support research on Parkinson's disease.

Professor J. B. Thomas 811,745 Ecu (European Commission) to support a research project entitled *Medicinal plants and their uses*.

Professor R. K. S. S. 114,102 (British Academy (Humanities Research Board) HEFCE/HRF) to support a research project entitled *Philosophy*.

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Stimmons, £85,820 (Wellcome Trust) to support a research project entitled *Control of the immune system in the development of AIDS*.

Professor C. P. Page, 1173,644 (Wellcome Trust) to support a research project entitled *Control of the immune system in the development of AIDS*.

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OBITUARIES

SQUADRON LEADER ROBIN McNAIR

Squadron Leader Robin McNair, DFC and Bar, Battle of Britain pilot and sales and services manager of BEA, 1967-77, died on May 18 aged 77. He was born on May 21, 1918.

TYPIFYING the fighting spirit of the Battle of Britain, Robin McNair pursued a dashing and distinguished wartime career in the Royal Air Force. During the course of the Second World War he completed almost 300 operational sorties. Renowned for his courage and his consideration for those whom he commanded, he himself would often take the most exposed position when he led a squadron. He was shot down several times and was an eminent member of the Caterpillar Club, an exclusive society for those who have saved their lives by parachuting from a damaged aircraft.

McNair was an expert pilot, managing once to glide an aircraft whose engines had been incapacitated by hostile fire several miles across occupied France to land it undamaged behind Allied lines. He was awarded the DFC in 1942 for the part he played warding off air raids and for his role as a member of No 87 Squadron (Hurricanes) in the Dieppe raid. In 1944 he was awarded a Bar to his DFC after commanding No 247 Squadron in the death and glory operations of Typhoons across the Channel in the Normandy invasion.

On demobilisation McNair went on to pursue a career in the field of civil aviation. Joining British European Airways Corporation (BEA) on its inception in 1946, he went to become one of its chief commercial negotiators. From 1966 to 1977, in his position as sales and services manager, he was responsible for the whole marketing and sales organisation of the company over a territory reaching from the Benelux countries to Morocco and Algeria. BEA's annual revenue for this area grew from £15 million to more than £60 million.

Robin John McNair was educated at the Roman Catholic Douai School in Berkshire, a school to which he was



always to remain loyal — he later became president of the Douai Society. He was a keen sportsman on both the cricket and rugby fields, playing each at county level.

In February 1939 he joined the RAF Volunteer Reserve and six months later he was called up. He flew in the No 3 and No 96 Fighter Squadrons; as a member of the No 87 Squadron (Hurricanes) he took part in the 1942 Dieppe raid and as the flight commander of the No 245 Squadron he was involved in the destruction of flying bomb targets in France, Belgium and The Netherlands, and in the bombing of German airfields and installations.

In August 1944, as acting wing commander, 124 Wing, Normandy, he took part in tactical operations during

the Falaise Gap battle before, after a double tour of duty, going on to train Typhoon pilots at 12 Group headquarters. In 1945 he was in command of No 74 Squadron (Meteos), among the first three RAF squadrons, to be equipped with jet fighters.

Demobilised upon Whitehall request at the end of 1945, McNair worked for a short while for the Ministry of Civil Aviation in London, before joining BEA, with whom he was to remain until his retirement. He was based first in Frankfurt where his work represented an important facility both for re-establishing postwar diplomatic and commercial links between Britain and Federal Germany and for the local American and military and commercial presence.

He then worked in Geneva for two years before returning in 1951 to the BEA head office in London to take the post of deputy to Lord Amherst, the director for Associated Companies (AC). Here he played a significant role in facilitating commercial diplomatic channels of communication with countries emerging from the political upheavals of the war.

AC's strong aviation links with Cyprus greatly assisted commercial diplomacy during that island's long (and often bloody) struggle first for enosis and then for independence. Later, with Cypriot independence, McNair assisted in negotiating with the highest political and commercial personages in the country, including Archbishop Makarios (later President of Cyprus) to secure British aviation's interest and influence in Cyprus Airways. He also worked with Olympic Airways and Aristotle Onassis during the complex negotiation of a BA/Olympic Airways consortium for the hire of aircraft and exploitation of European and Mediterranean routes.

In 1965 McNair, as assistant market development manager, investigated means of increasing inward traffic and tourism to Britain. From 1967 to 1977 he was sales and services manager and deputy general manager for BEA throughout the Western Europe region and North Africa. Then, after two years as ground services manager in Southern and Western Europe he retired in 1979.

Throughout his life, McNair remained a devout Roman Catholic. During the war, whenever he was responsible for shooting down one of the enemy, he would make it a priority as soon as he returned to Britain to have a Mass said for the dead pilot. After his retirement he became a dedicated member of his parish committee and of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, a charity which aids the sick and the impoverished. He was also a committed member of the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child.

He is survived by his wife Estelle, who he married in 1940, and by three sons and four daughters.

JOHN HAYCRAFT

John Haycraft, CBE, language teacher and writer, died of a heart condition on May 23 aged 69. He was born on December 11, 1926.



IN THE world of teaching languages to foreigners, John Haycraft was a charismatic and uniquely influential figure. Through International House in London, which he co-founded with his Swedish wife Brita, he built up a British-based worldwide network of more than 100 affiliated privately owned language schools. But International House remained a non-profit-making foundation. Haycraft worked in the best tradition of the British amateur, savoring riches and seeking a simple lifestyle.

From the 1950s he pioneered lively new ways of teaching languages, using, for example, drama and role-playing. His intensive teacher-training courses in London became famous and did much to establish EFL — English as a Foreign Language — as a recognised discipline of its own. A man of huge energy and passion, Haycraft carried through life a strong internationalist vision. He hated the narrowness of nationalism and saw the learning of languages as an essential vehicle to world understanding.

While his main effort went into teaching English, he was equally concerned for the British to learn other tongues: he spoke six languages himself.

John Stacpoole Haycraft was born in India. He was the son of a British officer in the Indian Army who died when his son was only two. With his mother — a professional tennis player, part Bavarian and part Italian — Haycraft spent his early years in France and Italy. Despite the classic English education that followed at Wellington College — of which he became head boy — and Jesus College, Oxford, he never felt totally English and was more at home with foreigners.

After the war he crusaded for the World Government movement. Intending to be a writer, and feeling an affinity for the Mediterranean, Haycraft went in 1953 to Spain, planning to earn his living by teaching English. He and his wife set up the first modest International House School in Córdoba. His book *Babel in Spain* described the six happy years which he spent there.

In 1959 Haycraft transferred his venture to central London, starting a small International House there. Believing that most EFL teaching was stilted and archaic, Haycraft set about training new teachers in his methods. At a time when English was fast developing as the world language, the need for new schools rapidly grew. Affiliated schools were opened all across the globe — from Estonia to Argentina — although International House itself owned only its London base.

Spain and Italy currently have about 20 schools each. Haycraft and his wife started and ran the Rome school for a while before, in 1971, founding another big school in Paris. This one, however, caused some complications, partly because of French bureaucracy and suspicion but also in part thanks to Haycraft's own blazing optimism displayed in the face of every adversity, which often led him to overreach himself.

In London, Haycraft pioneered "teaching theatre", with actors performing little plays as part of the learning process. Students did similar role-playing sketches. Haycraft collaborated with the BBC World Service's *English by Radio*. He was always quick to see the benefits of new

technologies, first language laboratories, later videos and computers. Haycraft also put stress on social and cultural activities, on music, discussions, parties and outings.

Haycraft was appointed CBE in 1982. In 1990 he retired as director-general, but was then invited to help to set up International House affiliated schools in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet bloc. Haycraft was quick to take up the roving job, starting schools in Kiev and Timisoara. But the work was a strain and probably hastened the heart trouble which killed him.

Haycraft rarely gave himself enough time for his second career and first ambition: writing. His two accounts of his earlier teaching years, *Babel in Spain* and *Babel in London*, show the lively humor and insatiable interest of their author.

There followed *Italian Labyrinth* in 1985 and *In Search of the French Revolution* in 1989, an unusual travel book which revealed his fascination with history. He had just completed his memoirs when he died — two years after his younger brother Colin, the well-known publisher and chairman of Duckworth.

He leaves his widow, Brita, and their daughter and two sons.

DOROTHEA BRAUS

Dorothea Braus, concert pianist, died on May 22 aged 94. She was born on November 11, 1901.

DOROTHEA BRAUS launched her career in Britain by the direct intervention and patronage of Myra Hess. It was Hess who procured the all-important work permit for her exiled German friend during the war. Afterwards she invited Braus to play in her lunchtime concerts at the National Gallery which ran uninterrupted through all the bombardments of the Blitz, and which did so much to fortify the battered morale of London citizens.

On the concert platform, Braus appeared petite, slim and striking-looking. She possessed great rhythmic power as a performer, as well as a firm sense of the structure and style of classical music, and depths of romantic feeling. But she was equally adept at interpreting modern piano works.

Dorothea Klara Marcelle Else Braus was born and brought up in Heidelberg, the daughter of a professor of anatomy, and the granddaughter of two musical men. One grandfather had played piano duets with Brahms; the other played the violin and



toured with a string quartet. It was the latter who first placed her tiny fingers on the keyboard of a piano.

She gave the first public demonstration of virtuosity at the age of 11 at a concert in Heidelberg, but was then struck by misfortune. She had practised too much, straining a wrist and arm so badly that

a whole year passed before she was allowed to touch the keyboard again. She recovered and toured Europe from the age of 17, performing concerts with some of the best orchestras. During one tour she played in Bayreuth and stayed as a guest in the old home of Wagner. Adolf Hitler was staying in another wing of

the house, and Braus was forced to endure his company at mealtimes. She remembered: "He never took part in any conversation, and sat looking glum, taciturn, preoccupied and repulsive. I could not understand the fascination he had over people."

In 1930 Dorothea married a German Jewish businessman, Herbert Steinberg. His business was taken over by the Nazis, and the couple were forced to flee their home and to come to Britain in 1936. At first they settled in Nelson, Lancashire, but with the outbreak of war Steinberg was interned in the Isle of Man. Sensibly, Braus wrote to Myra Hess to explain her predicament, and Hess was instrumental in getting Dorothea the crucial work permit which enabled her to restart her career.

Through Hess, Braus was invited to give concerts at the National Gallery, at one of which she played an early work of Britten's, *Holiday Suite*. Braus met Britten and greatly admired his work. She also gave a number of concerts at the Wigmore Hall and in the North of England. Her repertoire was catholic, encompassing everything from Bach and Mozart, through the Romantics to Britten and Pfitzner. There

was a natural femininity about her playing, but she did not shy away from taking on big, muscular works, even if, in less enlightened days, her courage did not always win her admirers. *The Times* reviewer of a concert at the Wigmore Hall in 1958 complained that there were four works which women should never attempt — "in public at least" — and that Braus had been rash enough to include two of these in her recital. Braus was not daunted by the criticism, and kept Schumann's fantasia and Beethoven's *Les Adieux* in her repertoire.

She began a long professional association with the conductor Harry Blech in the late 1940s. Braus had first seen Blech conducting the London Symphony Players, a student orchestra, in a work by Mozart, and she approached him backstage after the concert to compliment him enthusiastically on his interpretation. She then engaged him to assemble a Mozart orchestra with which she could play a couple of Mozart concertos. Blech named the new orchestra the London Mozart Players. The first concert was an enormous success, and Blech led the orchestra on to great heights on the international circuit. Dorothea Braus continued her own career at concert level until her mid-seventies, retiring in 1979.

Unusually for a concert pianist, particularly one of such slight build, Braus had been a keen mountaineer as a girl. She also took a lively interest in current affairs, and she maintained a beautiful garden at her home in Hadley Wood.

Braus had no children, and her husband died in 1955. In her long widowhood she lived with her housekeeper, Betty Wignam, who had been in her service since 1948, and who insisted on calling her employer "Mrs Steinberg" even after almost fifty years in her service. Despite the apparent formality, it was a devoted friendship.

REAR-ADMIRAL LEWIS COMBS

Rear-Admiral Lewis Combs, a US Navy engineer who created and directed the Seabees during the Second World War, died at Red Hook, New York, on May 20 aged 101. He was born at Manchester Centre, Vermont, on April 7, 1895.

THERE were no combat ribbons on the chest of Lewis Combs, but he arguably did more to achieve victory for the Allies in the Second World War than a regiment of conventional heroes. Combs's brainchildren were the Naval Construction Battalions, affectionately known from their initials as the Seabees, who followed the American Forces from island to island in the Pacific, building airstrips, docks, housing and other civil engineering projects, often under enemy fire.

It was an impressive feat of logistics, made possible only by Combs's foresight and genius for organisation and planning. The Seabees did not exist in January 1938 when Combs took up a posting as assistant chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks at the Washington Navy Yard. Nor did they when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, thrusting America into a war that it had been strenuously avoiding. But Combs and his boss,

Admiral Ben Moreell, had foreseen the need for such a force and had spent the past four years making plans and laying the necessary groundwork. Within weeks of Pearl Harbor, the first Seabee battalions had been formed.

Combs's responsibilities were huge. In addition to training and directing the combat engineers, and arranging the materials they needed to build everything from supply dumps to hospitals and sewage systems, he also supervised the rapid expansion of the Navy's shore establishments in the United States. His command grew from 120 civil engineering officers before the start of the war to 10,000 officers and more than 325,000 men at its conclusion.

In the midst of all this, Combs found time to act as technical adviser on the 1944 John Wayne film *The Fighting Seabees*. Wayne was to call on him again in 1949, after hearing that the Admiral had landed on a Seabee-repaired airstrip on Iwo Jima while much of the island was still held by the Japanese, to serve as consultant on *The Sands of Iwo Jima*. That trip was typical of Combs's activities during the war, making frequent tours of inspection to advanced bases, striving to improve the services offered by his Seabees.

Combs received the Distinguished Service Medal for his wartime efforts. "By his foresight, judgment, extraordinary professional ability and conscientious devotion to duty," the extensive citation concluded, "he contributed materially to the successful prosecution of the war."

Lewis Barton Combs had entered the Navy in 1917, after studying civil engineering at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and passing a competitive examination. Six weeks later, after a crash course of indoctrination at the Annapolis Naval Academy, Combs found himself as a Lieutenant in charge of field construction at the Washington Navy Yard.

That experience, during the period of frenetic expansion caused by America's entry into the First World War, was to stand him in good stead. He subsequently served in Haiti during the American occupation of that island in the 1920s, building roads and bridges and holding responsibility for harbours and lighthouses.

Lewis Combs retired from the Navy in 1947 and returned to Rensselaer, where he spent the next 15 years as head of the civil engineering department.

His wife, Laura, died in March this year. They had been married for 71 years. He leaves no immediate survivors.

PERSONAL COLUMN

TICKETS FOR SALE

TICKETS

WIMBLEDON 96
ROYAL ASCOT
BRITISH GRAND PRIX
HENLEY ROYAL
REGATTA
LAST NIGHT'S PHONOS
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MYOR PARK CONCERT
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

MS KITTY COTTEE

We are endeavouring to locate
Mrs K. Cottee. If anybody
knows her whereabouts, kindly
contact Melissa, Centre
Wilmot & Cocks of 30/34
Pine Street, Clacton, Essex.
Tel: 01206 627777.
ref: JPM within two weeks of
today's date.

ANIMALS IN NEED

Please help us get compassionate care to
stray and unwanted cats and dogs.
We need volunteers to help us find
them homes for ever. If you
cannot do this, we will do it for
you. We will pay for the vet's
costs at the pound or any other
vet.

WANTED: LOST DOG
A small, black and white dog,
possibly a terrier, missing since
Christmas. Please return to
0171 250 1201.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RUKBA

Results of the 1996 Rukba Baffle drawn on
Monday 22nd May 1996

Prize	Amount
1st Prize	£2746
2nd Prize	£17910
3rd Prize	£16590
4th Prize	£9947
5th Prize	£13478
6th Prize	£12621
7th Prize	£12621
8th Prize	£6179

Rukba
Helping elderly people stay independent
Charity Registration No. 210729
The Royal United Kingdom
Benevolent Association
6 Avonmore Road, London W14 8RL
Telephone 0171 602 6274

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C.H.A. Group, Prospect, London.
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If you are making your will
please think of B.E.S.M.A. We
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women who have lost limbs in
the service of this country.

Ex-servicemen, British
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Association, c/o British
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working days prior to publication and are accepted subject to
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TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

SIR,

It is not, I believe, very common for a female to address a letter to the Editor of a Newspaper. My motive for doing so on the present occasion, is to acquaint the benevolent part of your readers of a severe grievance with which a very considerable number of the industrious and virtuous part of my own sex is at present oppressed.

This grievance originates in a most cruel, unmanly, and inhuman combination of the journeyman tailors of this metropolis, to the number of 10,000, to deprive a few hundreds of industrious, and hitherto virtuous women, of the means of obtaining an honest livelihood by their needle.

I and my three daughters, in common with all who are now involved in the same ruin, have for many years earned a comfortable subsistence by making waistcoats and drawers for the trade.

On Monday the 5th instant, when we attended our master, as usual, to get fresh work, he informed us, that his journeyman had that morning struck against us, and had given him formal notice, that if he should from that time give out work to us, or to any other women, or to any person whatever, that they

ON THIS DAY

May 30, 1806

The paper's circulation was about 3,000 and confined to the nobility, MPs and the clubs and coffee houses, which makes this letter all the more remarkable. It could be the first in *The Times* by a woman; it was certainly an early shot in the sex discrimination war.

It is generally allowed, that we do our work much neater, cleaner, and better, than the men; and, I am informed, that, notwithstanding the inferiority of their work, they have entered from their masters a considerable addition to the established price.

In justification of their conduct towards us poor women, they say, we had no right to carry on our business, and that it was a shame we should ever have been encouraged. Good God, Sir! if one sex has a greater right than another to a business carried on by the needle, surely that right must be ours; nature points it out as peculiarly adapted to our constitutions and to our strength. Men are formed for more active and laborious employment, and it seems extraordinary that such a race of men as the brave, robust, and hardy inhabitants of this island should in ancient times have given encouragement to men employed in a way so sedentary and unmanly as in working with a needle.

It remains, therefore, for the present enlightened age to correct this violation of women's just and natural rights, (which nothing but habit can now reconcile) by the establishment of an institution to train up young women to such employments as their constitutions and abilities are adapted to...

I am, Sir, your very humble servant,
London, May 14, 1806. A TAYLOR'S WIDOW.

NEWS

Brussels hits back against veto

Europe launched a counterstrike against Britain's blocking tactics. After Jacques Santer, the president of the European Commission, had accused John Major of "hostage-taking", Brussels announced measures that angered Euro-sceptics.

The Commission said more beef compensation would be given to German and French farmers. It also said that most EU fishing fleets must face a 40 per cent reduction and that it must be given details of the brands in the formula milk scare, which have not yet been divulged in Britain. Page 1

Dunblane teacher tells of massacre

Teachers told the Dunblane inquiry of the moments when Thomas Hamilton opened fire. Mary Blake said: "I can remember the children shouting. It was so loud that the screams seemed to be inside my head". Pages 1, 8, 9

Tories slip back

The Tories have failed to reap any immediate electoral benefit from the beef confrontation with the European Union, a MORI poll reveals. Page 1

Early Peres lead

Early exit polls from the Israeli elections showed Shimon Peres, the Prime Minister, leading by a narrow margin. Polls gave Mr Peres a lead of between 1-5 per cent over Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of Likud. Page 1

Unruffled Clarke

An unruffled Kenneth Clarke delivered a double rebuff to Tory rightwingers, refusing to promise tax cuts or to sign up for a long beef war with Europe. Page 2

Peace for Duchess

The Duchess of York will begin a quest to find "inner peace" in her new life as a single working mother after her divorce is made absolute today. Page 3

New hospital beds

Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, ordered extra intensive care beds for critically ill children to try to stem complaints that hospitals are repeatedly turning youngsters away. Page 5

Death mountain

The actor Brian Blessed criticised climbers who had turned Everest into a "mountain of death" through their selfish pursuit of the summit. Page 7

Washington speech found under sofa

The Library of Congress in Washington emerged last night as a likely bidder for an important early American document found under a sofa in a Suffolk country house. Book experts are satisfied that the single sheet of paper is the work of George Washington and is a missing fragment of a draft of the speech he intended to give at his inauguration. Page 1

Reporter's aid

Martin Bell, the BBC's war correspondent in the former Yugoslavia, is helping a victim of the conflict to complete her education in Britain. Page 10

Ulster poll fears

Voters go to the polls in Northern Ireland amid fears that the historic election to all-party talks will attract a low turn-out. Page 13

War crimes trial

Anthony Loyd asks: what are the practical benefits that the trial in The Hague will have for reconciliation among victims of war crimes in Bosnia? Page 14

Clinton uncertainty

President Clinton's future in Washington looked much less certain after the sensational convictions of his political heir and former partner in the first big Whitewater trial. Page 15

Naval smugglers

The battered image of the US Navy suffered a fresh blow with the disclosure that 21 American sailors have been arrested in Naples for smuggling heroin and cocaine into Italy. Page 16

Yeltsin offer

President Yeltsin stepped up the pressure to achieve a peace settlement in Chechnya before the June 16 presidential election with the announcement of a new power-sharing treaty for the republic. Page 17



Jewish settlers, all armed with Uzi sub-machineguns, waiting to vote in the West Bank town of Hebron yesterday. Page 1

SPORT

Misery Line: Shares in Prism Rail, the company that runs the so-called misery line from London to Southampton, doubled in first dealings on the stockmarket. Page 25

Lloyds: The Lloyd's of London insurance market is under pressure to provide its hardest hit names with an annual "pension" as part of its multi-billion settlement offer to 34,000 names. Page 25

Power battle: More than 1,000 jobs are likely to go in the south of England if Southern Electric wins a bid for Southern Water launched yesterday. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 15.5 to 3775.7, Sterling rose from 85.1 to 85.4 after a rise from \$1.5122 to \$1.5189 and from DM2.3410 to DM2.3472. Page 28

FOOTBALL

The Football Association has been forced to admit that the reported vandalism on the England team's flight from Hong Kong is more than a storm in a champagne glass. Page 48

Tennis: Andre Agassi, the third seed, was knocked out in the second round of the French Open, the only grand slam event has still to win. Page 48

Crickets: Jack Bannister, president of the Cricketers' Association, has resigned because of his involvement with a controversial book by Ray Illingworth. Page 48

Athletics: Denise Lewis, the British heptathlon champion, who has been an actress and a model, now has her sights set on an Olympic medal. Page 46

ARTS

Films of the week: The Coen brothers strike cinematic gold with their new Cannes award-winning film *Fargo*, while Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino fail to score with their juvenile romp *From Dusk Till Dawn*. Page 37

Change of direction: The renowned theatre director Robert Lepage experiments with storytelling in his first film as a director, *Le Confessionnel*. Page 37

New video releases: Pierce Brosnan, the best Bond since Connery, hits the small screen in the thrilling *Goldeneye*. Page 38

Damp debut: There aren't many laughs in *The Comedy of Errors*, the Shakespearean production that opened the Open Air Theatre season in Regent's Park. Page 39

FEATURES

Going to Vermeer: Seven people talk about their pilgrimage to The Hague to visit one of the most popular exhibitions of the century. Page 19

Silent partner: There are gays and lesbians working in most large companies but one in five feel the need to keep quiet. Page 18

Dr Thomas Stuttaford looks at the way twins are treated; plus the dangers of taking too many slimming pills. Page 18

BOOKS

Into another world: Linda Colley studies Pitt the Younger; Woodrow Wyatt on Asquith's daughter; and Roger Scruton analyses a licence to kill. Page 41

TRAVEL

No-go area: Thomson has discovered that the Riviera is failing to tempt the British. Page 35

Bargains of the week: The latest offers on holidays, ferries, flights and hotels. Page 34

THE PAPERS

The two rivals in the Israeli elections, Shimon Peres and Benjamin Netanyahu, have based their respective appeals on pithy word-play: Peres wants peace in order to have security, Netanyahu security in order to have peace. A victory for Peres would be more reassuring for the world. —ABC, Madrid

TOMORROW

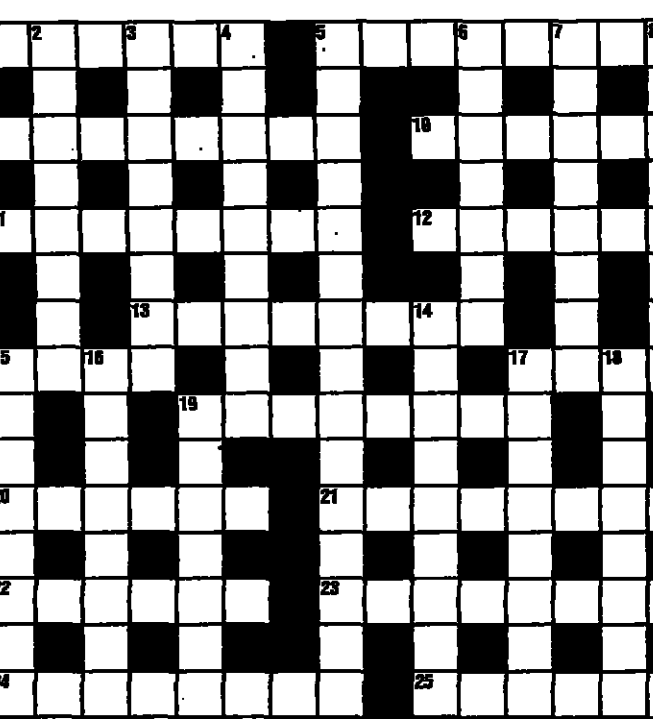
IN THE TIMES

INTERVIEW
Valerie Grove meets producer Robert Fox (left) whose first film, *A Month by the Lake*, stars Edward Fox and Vanessa Redgrave

WIN VIP TICKETS
Tickets to the British Masters Championship to be won



THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,181



ACROSS

- Keenness shown by a coach's first university crew (6).
- Go beyond what's improper to a church (8).
- Course that's clear when there's disorder in Commons, note (8).
- Deliveries left before end of the day, too (6).
- Confines a noblewoman within Italy (8).
- Foreign cheers for model (6).
- Fruit put on stake's come out earlier (8).
- Said to stop supply of drink - on what occasion? (4).
- Still, like head, not moved to disengage (8).
- It affords limited turning in position (6).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,180

TRANSOM PARABLE
A LEAKY TUB
GRIMALKIN GRASP
E B F E U V E
NYALIA STAGEHAND
D B R A C D O I
GAVEUPHESHOSH
A R O I D O E
BERKSHIREDOONS
S E A N Y O
PAULINITE TABOO
F O D I M U N
LOIRE GUERRILLA
E I G A N N A T
DIGGERS TESSERA

DOWN

- Scientific equipment to check transport (4-6).
- Buy influence (6).
- A game with aggressive American requires a prepared defence (8).
- Friend at nursery school helping to take girl back in (8).
- Wake participant with extra enthusiasm (6).
- Tree providing shade to Aussie bloke avoiding heat, initially (8).
- One unable to perform without notes (8).
- Figure giving address with political significance (6,3).
- What customs may require one to do? It's easy to judge (4-3-4,4).
- Piece of music, one held in respect a great deal (7).
- A crowd going to *The King and I* for entertainment after sport (5-3).
- Rick on the farm gets stuck after country dancing (8).
- Evaluate goods held in appropriate plant (4,5).
- Event that's fantastic crowd-puller? Not half (5,3).
- Trip in Crete taken by Athenian character and others from Rome (2,6).
- Flaw in the deal is both a problem and a tricky situation (8).
- Like a fiddler's movement sideways (8).
- Source of energy that's symbolically acceptable? (7).

Times Two Crossword, page 48

FORECAST

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0801 500 followed by the appropriate code:
Greater London... 701
Kent/Surrey/Sussex... 702
Dorset/Wiltshire... 703
Devon & Cornwall... 704
Wiltshire/Gloucestershire... 705
Berkshire/Buckinghamshire... 706
Bedfordshire & Essex... 707
Northamptonshire/Cambridgeshire... 708
West Midlands & Shropshire... 709
Shropshire/Staffordshire & Warwickshire... 710
North West... 711
East Midlands... 712
Lincolnshire & Humberside... 713
Derbyshire & Yorkshire... 714
Gwynedd & Cheshire... 715
North Wales... 716
North East & Durham... 717
North Yorkshire & Lancashire... 718
South Yorkshire & Lancashire... 719
South Wales... 720
East of England... 721
East Angles & Cambridgeshire... 722
Central Scotland... 723
Glasgow & E Highlands... 724
NW Scotland... 725
Glasgow, Orkney & Shetland... 726
NIreland... 727
Weathercast is charged at 39p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.

A ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic/roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0338 401 followed by the appropriate code:
London & SE traffic, roadworks... 731
South/Surrey/Sussex/Bucks/Essex... 732
Kent/Surrey/Sussex/Hants... 733
M25 London Orbital only... 734
National motorways... 735
Wales... 736
Midlands... 737
East Angles... 738
North-west England... 739
North-east England... 740
Scotland... 741
Northern Ireland... 742
AA Roadwatch is charged at 39p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Grassano, Kent, 22C (72F); lowest day temp: Cape Wrath, Highland, 12C (54F); highest rainfall: Asquith, Cumbria, 0.77in; highest transmitter: Clacton, Essex, 9.1hr.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up 34.5% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1995

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=drizzle; f=fair; g=gale; h=hail; i=rain; sh=showers; w=wind; x=unknown; y=thunder
Sun Rain Max F
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ABROAD

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Algeria 21 70 f

HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 4:51 am
Sun sets: 9:05 pm
Moon sets: 3:55 am
Moon rises: 6:11 pm

FORECAST

moderate to fresh, south or south-easterly, becoming strong and turning southwesterly. Warm 20C (68F).
[Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: dry start, rain soon spreading from southwest but becoming mainly dry again. More rain expected later. Wind south-easterly, moderate increasing strong to gale force, turning southwesterly later. Max 16C (61F).
[SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll, NW Scotland, N Ireland: wet and windy, bursts of rain at times; clearer, showery weather spreading from west. Wind strong to gale force south-easterly, turning southwesterly later. Max 18C (64F).
[Outlook: showers in the northwest tomorrow, becoming more widespread on Saturday.
Pollen forecast: low in Scotland, northern England, Northern Ireland, and London; low to moderate in Midlands, East Angles, Wales, south-east and southwest England.

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TV LISTING

Preview: The storming of the Iranian Embassy is reconstructed by those who took part. *SAS - The Soldiers' Story* (ITV, 9pm). Review: Matthew Bond wonders how far violence can be funny. Page 47

OPINION

Test of nerve

If our poll is an early portent of others to come, the new-found Tory unity will soon evaporate. Then the chances of an early election will vanish too. Page 21

The credibility chasm

Character issues are always an element in presidential elections. That is quite proper given that Mr Clinton's role is part symbolic head of state as well as head of government. Page 21

Tiger week

The Federation of Zoos has nominated this to be Tiger Week. It is appealing for money and deserves the support of all who cherish the wild. Page 21

COLUMNS

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

Respectable journalists, of liberal views, living comfortably in New York, still do not want to tell the American public what the allegations are against Bill Clinton, or what the evidence is. It is, therefore, still entirely possible that he will be re-elected in November. Page 20

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN

In Ireland, changing from nationalist to unionist (or vice versa) is exceedingly rare and is regarded as much more fundamental than a mere shift in party allegiance. But it has made me feel younger and I hope I shall be elected to the new forum. Page 20

MAGNUS LINKATER

Personally, I would support the tartan tax because that is what will give a Scottish parliament real teeth. Page 20

CENTURIES

Squadron Leader Robin McNair, DFC and Bar, Battle of Britain pilot; John Hayercraft, language teacher; Dorothea Brauns, concert pianist; Rear Admiral Lewis Combs, US Navy engineer and creator of the Seabees. Page 23

DEFENCE

Defence chiefs on Forces pensions; Edwina Currie on the beef crisis; science at the British Library; Labour activists. Page 21

JANUARY
The
SIX
OF
THE
TWO-WAY
STRICTLY
NAMES
FOR LLO
PENS



JANET BUSH 29

The real economic story is hidden in the small print



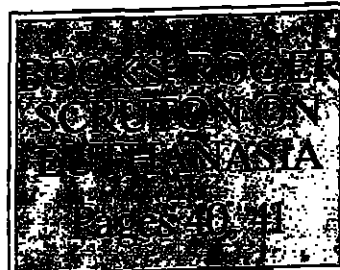
ARTS 37-39

Robert Lepage sets his sights on the silver screen



SPORT 42-48

Woodruff ends Agassi's hopes in French Open



THE TIMES

2

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

THURSDAY MAY 30 1996

Two-way race to secure right to screen Premiership live

By Jason Nisse

THE battle over who will have the rights to televise FA Carling Premiership League football live is due to be decided next week, with bidders told to offer a minimum of £150 million a year.

Only two bidders are expected to make offers — British Sky Broadcasting, which has the current contract worth £304 million over five years, and a joint offer from Mirror Group and Carlton Communications.

Other potential offers from a joint Pearson/MAI consortium and Kirch, the German group, have fallen by the wayside during talks with Rick Parry, chief executive

of the Premiership League, over the past few months.

The two remaining bidders have been asked to make a final presentation to the chairman of the 20 football clubs in the Premiership League at a two-day meeting to be held in Coventry at the end of next week.

The bidders have been told that it is likely that a final decision on the new contract, which will run from the start of the 1997/98 season, will be made at the meeting. "In TV terms it will be the cup final," said one Premiership chairman. "The bids have to be in excess of £150 million a year even to get to the negotiating table."

The contract will be for the rights to carry

live games on either satellite or cable. A separate contract to carry a highlights programme on either BBC or ITV will be negotiated once the first deal is signed.

BSkyB, which is 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of *The Times*, is the favourite to win back the contract. It is hoping to secure a new five-year contract, but the larger Premiership clubs want no more than a two- or three-year deal.

BSkyB has negotiated the right to match any other bid. But league sources said that this may not be allowed by the European Commission, which has told the Premiership League that the clause may breach European competition law.

The Mirror/Carlton bid will be well in excess of £150 million a year. Kelvin MacKenzie, head of Mirror's TV division, is currently putting the finishing touches to the offer, and has to decide whether to make it for two or three years. If successful, Mirror and Carlton will join forces to launch a sports channel to be run on cable TV. They have had talks with other programme makers, including Pearson, about supplying programming for the channel.

Calculations by Neil Junor, who is media analyst at NatWest Markets, show that a new sports cable channel charging just £8.25 a month would produce revenues of more

than £150 million a year within 12 months of being launched. If the channel was also carried on satellite, the income in the first year alone could be in excess of £250 million.

Mr Junor believes the Mirror/Carlton consortium could probably afford to bid in the region of £200 million a year for the rights to screen Premiership League football live and still make a sizeable profit.

With the advent of digital TV it is expected that leading clubs such as Manchester United, Arsenal and Liverpool will set up their own cable channels and sell television coverage of their matches on a pay-per-view basis. The new contract will cover the period until that level of service is feasible.

BUSINESS TODAY

FT-SE 100	3775.7	(+15.5)
Yield	4.0%	
FT-SE All share	1896.29	(+8.4)
Nikkei	22021.50	(+76.87)
New York	5703.39	(-6.28)
Dow Jones	672.57	(+0.34)
S&P Composite	672.57	(+0.34)
Federal Funds	5.25%	(5.25%)
Life long rate	6.25%	(6.25%)
Yield	6.25%	(6.25%)
3-month Interbank	6.25%	(6.25%)
Life long rate	106%	(106%)
New York	1.5213*	(1.5138)
London	1.5198	(1.5129)
DM	2.2477	(2.2415)
FR	7.5444	(7.5188)
SP	1.9329	(1.9271)
Yen	163.21	(164.28)
£ Index	65.4	(65.1)
Tokyo close	Yen 108.90	
Brent 15-day (Aug)	\$18.15	(\$18.30)
London close	\$391.25	(\$392.15)

* denotes midday trading price

Stricken names call for Lloyd's pension

By Sarah Bagnall

LOYD'S OF LONDON is under pressure to provide its hardest hit names with an annual "pension" as part of its multi-billion settlement offer to 34,000 names.

The call for further help is driven by concerns that thousands of names will be financially ruined if they accept the insurance market's settlement offer.

Lloyd's is in the process of a radical restructuring plan, involving names paying a fee to offload all their future liabilities as well as losing their Lloyd's deposits. For an estimated 6,000 names the bill they will receive from Lloyd's will leave them with little or no assets and they will have little remaining income. As a result Lloyd's has offered £200 million of extra assistance.

However, this so-called "tranche 4" of debt credits will not resolve many names' problems. In thousands of cases their Lloyd's deposits are in the form of bank guarantees against their homes and the loss of their Lloyd's deposits would in normal circumstances mean the loss of their homes.

In a bid to overcome this Lloyd's is offering names the chance to take out a special mortgage, but this still leaves names with the problem of how to fund the interest payments.

In a letter to names Michael Deeny, chairman of the Gooda Walker Action Group, wrote: "This is a particularly hard fate for elderly names who face an old age of penury and deprivation."

As a result, Lloyd's is being lobbied hard by numerous names' representatives, including the Association of Lloyd's Members and the Peltrin Names Association and Gooda Walker Action Group, to provide an annual income to ruined names.

Damon de Laszlo, chairman of the Peltrin Names Association, said: "There are many names who have borrowed to pay their losses and will be left with these debts after the settlement offer. They need financial help."

The idea is that ruined names will receive regular

cash payments that provide a minimum reasonable standard of living. Under the now defunct Hardship programme, Lloyd's own bankruptcy scheme, a couple were entitled to £17,500 a year after the payment of major outgoings, such as mortgage payments.

Lloyd's yesterday said it was in favour of the idea but was concerned about the potential cost and how to fund the payments.

Action group chairmen are urging names to apply for the tranche 4 debt credits so Lloyd's can use the applications to assess the magnitude of the income support needed. Mr Deeny said: "Such income support would be means tested and would only be available to those who have supplied the information required in the past by the Hardship Committee or that required for tranche 4 applications."

So far more than 3,800 names have applied for tranche 4 debt credits but about 2,500 who Lloyd's believes are eligible for assistance have failed to apply. The lack of response is thought to be due to the deep mistrust in which Lloyd's is held by many names. Some members of the society are wary about revealing financial details in case Lloyd's uses the information against them if the settlement offer founders. Lloyd's has tried to reassure names that the information is for the sole purpose of the settlement process.

Lloyd's intends to send out fresh indicative statements to names at the end of June, followed in early July by final statements which will detail how much each name has to pay Lloyd's. But it is unlikely that names will vote on whether to accept the offer at the market's annual meeting on July 15. Instead the 34-odd action groups will hold extraordinary meetings as soon as is practicable after the final statements are sent to names. It is after these meetings, in mid to late July, that names are expected to make their individual vote on whether to accept the offer.



Bob Howells, left, chairman of LTS Rail, and Godfrey Burley, Prism's chairman, who saw his company's shares double in value on AIM

Prism float reflects confidence

PRISM RAIL, which runs the London-Tilbury-Southend rail line, previously dubbed by many long-suffering passengers as the "miserable line", made anything but a miserable market debut. The shares steamed ahead to more than double on their first day's trading on the Alternative Investment Market (Philip Pangalos writes).

Investors in the company, the UK's first publicly-quoted train operator since national-

isation at the end of 1947, saw Prism's oversubscribed shares surge to a healthy premium from the start of trading. The shares ended their first day at 205p, compared with a 100p flotation price, and put in the shade the premium enjoyed by Rail-track investors.

Dealings in the company's

13 million ordinary shares on AIM came after a private placing of eight million new ordinary shares at 100p, which raised £8 million.

The placing was to enable the company to complete the acquisition of the franchise for LTS Rail, which operates the London-Tilbury-Southend line, and to provide working

capital and allow for much-needed investment. Investors instantly warmed to Prism, which is chaired by Godfrey Burley, taking the view that the group has an experienced management team that stands a good chance of winning further routes.

Prism, which has a 15-year franchise to run the London-Tilbury-Southend line, aspires to be a major rail player and makes no secret of wanting to bid for other franchises. The company has said that it will consider bidding for the 16 remaining franchises.

It also proposes to spend at least £14 million on station improvements and plans to build a new station at West Ham to provide a new interchange on the London Underground's District Line.

Pinstripe ostrich company closes

By Karen Zagor

THE Pinstripe Farming Company yesterday filed for voluntary liquidation just days after the Department of Trade and Industry started proceedings in the High Court to have the company wound up.

In the wake of the beef scare, thousands of investors have poured tens of millions of pounds into ostrich investment schemes in the hope that ostrich meat would become the favoured alternative. Some ostrich schemes have promised annual returns of up to 70 per cent, but with no evidence to substantiate these figures.

Pinstripe has chosen its own liquidator, Stephen Conn & Company in Manchester, but the DTI will continue its petition process and ask the court to appoint the Official Receiver as provisional liquidator. The same firm is acting

as liquidator for World Ostrich Farms, which collapsed at the end of April in the middle of an investigation by the Securities and Investment Board (SIB). The SIB is now trying to recover money from World Ostrich Farms, regarding the scheme as a collective investment, which, as such, falls under its regulatory remit.

The SIB had investigated Pinstripe before passing the papers on to the DTI. A similar move led to the DTI filing a winding-up petition against the Ostrich Farming Corporation. The case is now being fought, in the courts. OFC is also the subject of a Serious Fraud Office investigation. Both Pinstripe and the OFC escaped SIB's regulatory arm by selling birds rather than shares in a company.

Pru scheme survives dissent

By Jason Nisse

THE Prudential Corporation, which has over £30 billion invested in the UK stock market, was given a bloody nose by its shareholders yesterday when over 10 per cent of them voted against its new executive share incentive scheme.

The revolt was led by Standard Life, the giant Scottish mutual insurer with a 2.65 per cent stake. Its opposition to the scheme was revealed in *The Times* yesterday.

At the count 69.5 million shares, representing 10.4 per cent of the vote, were cast against the motion to approve the scheme, which pays out to directors if the Prudential performs better than the sixth-best company in the FT-SE 100 index over three years.

Water bid places 1,000 jobs at risk

By Christine Buckley

MORE THAN 1,000 jobs are likely to go in the South of England if Southern Electric wins a bid for Southern Water.

The regional electricity company yesterday launched a £1.6 billion rival offer to the £1.56 billion hostile approach made on Tuesday by ScottishPower.

The board of Southern Water, whose four main members will net £1.3 million from share options and keep their jobs in an enlarged organisation, have recommended the deal. Salary increases for the board members are expected as new roles have been created in the revamped board structure.

Southern Electric will close Southern Water's head office in Worthing, West Sussex, and will merge operations such as billing and information technology. Several analysts forecast annual savings of about

£45 million a year and that the combined staff numbers of about 6,100 would shrink to just over 5,000.

Pressure will now be on for a higher offer from ScottishPower, the integrated generation and supply business that last year bought Manweb, the English regional company, for £1.1 billion.

Southern Electric yesterday bought 10 per cent of Southern Water's shares for £156 million in a morning swoop on the market. Its bid is offering £10.13p a share in cash and new shares, and £9.75p a share in a cash deal. Southern Water's shares jumped 46p to 987p on the new bid.

Southern Electric revealed pre-tax profits of £293.9 million, up 16.6 per cent on the previous year. Its total dividend rises 25 per cent to 38.3p.

Britain is making a 'striking comeback'

By Philip Bassett
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BRITAIN is improving its place in the global competitiveness league table, according to a report published today. The World Economic Forum (WEF) ranks Britain 15th out of 49 countries that together account for 94 per cent of world economic output. The WEF says the UK has made a "striking comeback" over the past year.

Singapore, Hong Kong, New Zealand, the USA and Luxembourg fill the first five places, with India, Hungary, Venezuela, Brazil and Russia at the bottom. Japan and Germany are ranked 13th and 22nd respectively, with France 23rd and Italy 41st.

Britain scores well in terms of financial depth and ease of hiring and firing, but badly over education and training. In investment it is second to bottom.

The report says Anglo-Saxon economies largely outrank those in the rest of the EU, and that countries such as the USA and Britain have definitely improved their competitiveness — though it warns that as a result, "job insecurity and income inequality are becoming very serious concerns."

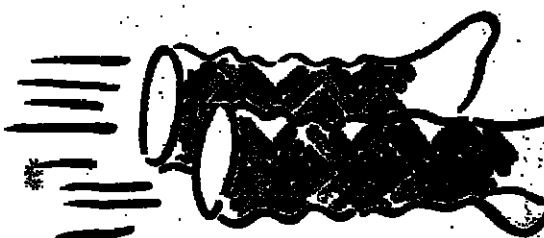
The WEF's findings contrast sharply with a forthcoming similar report on competitiveness from the International Institute for Management Development, preliminary details of which were released earlier this week. The IMD's report said Britain has slipped from 15th to 19th place in its world competitiveness league.

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Farmers to harvest shares from Dairy Crest flotation

By PAUL DURMAN

ABOUT 27,000 dairy farmers will receive shares and cash worth an average of £7,500 when Dairy Crest, the milk and cheese company, is floated on the stock market this summer.

The farmers own Dairy Crest via the Residual Milk Marketing Board (RMMB), a vestige of the dairy industry as it existed before deregulation in 1994.

Farmers will be offered about £66 million in cash as a repayment of the money Dairy Crest provided to set up Milk Marque, the body that has taken over the sale of the bulk of the UK's milk production. Most farmers will also receive shares in the company, which is expected to command a market value of £200 million.

The RMMB is pushing ahead with the flotation in spite of receiving a number of offers to buy Dairy Crest or parts of it. Sir Derek Andrews, the RMMB's chairman, said the board judged that dairy farmers wanted Dairy Crest to remain as a "third force" in the industry alongside Northern Foods and Unigate.

Dairy Crest dismissed fears about a threat from BSE, or mad cow disease. John Houlston, chief executive, said: "There's not the slightest intimation anywhere that there's any connection between milk and BSE."

Even if the Government ends up culling many more dairy cows than it currently proposes, the company believes any impact on its profits will be modest. Mr Houlston said Dairy Crest would move to making more high-margin

products, such as mature cheddar.

The company also reported an 11 per cent increase in operating profits to £35.4 million for the year to March 31. The absence of restructuring costs meant that this produced a 69 per cent boost in pre-tax profits to £37.4 million. Annual sales were £739.6 million.

Although Dairy Crest faces the industry-wide problem of sharply declining doorstep deliveries and powerful customers in the shape of the supermarkets, it hopes to concentrate on branded goods with higher profit margins. Clover spreads, Friji milk shakes, mature cheddars and other "value-added" products represent about 40 per cent of the £350 million a year consumer foods arm of the business.

Dairy Crest, a strong cash generator, has no debt and will not raise further funds when it comes to the market. New shares will be issued to pay off the £66 million due to farmers. The timetable for the flotation has still to be finalised.

Since 1990, the company has cut staff numbers from 12,500 to 3,400, and reduced the number of its plants from 32 to 11. It has closed its Whitland creamery and, last November, bought Mendip Foods to form the UK's biggest mature cheddar business.

Dairy Crest is being advised by Lazard and by Hoare Govett as brokers. The RMMB is advised by Schroders.

Pennington, page 27



Mike Dowdall, left, Dairy Crest's chairman, and John Houlston reported higher profits

Anglian to invest customer rebates

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

WATER customer rebates will not be offered in East Anglia for the foreseeable future after a poor response and some hostility from households.

Alan Smith, managing director of Anglian Water, which last year increased pre-tax profits 3.7 per cent to £238.6 million, said: "People don't want to £6 a year or so. In fact they think it's derisory. We've found they would much rather see the money spent on improvements."

Anglian is to put an extra £17 million into customer service improvements, making £32 million for the year. It announced a dividend increase of 15.4 per cent, taking the total to 30p (26p).

It is also planning to increase cost savings to £40 million a year by 1998. Last year it saved £20 million through extra efficiencies. Some of the increased savings will come from job reductions, but the company is not indicating how many positions will be lost.

Anglian is looking overseas for expansion. Last year its operations in the Americas, Europe and Asia produced an operating loss of £5.7 million. In the previous year the loss was £6.3 million.

With £6 million a year spent on marketing, Mr Smith said it would be a few years before the overseas division would break even. "It is a difficult road but it is important to remain on it," he said. The final dividend of 21.1p is payable October 1.

Pennington, page 27

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Gilts auction boost by cash-rich institutions

THE Treasury breathed a sigh of relief yesterday as demand at the second big gilt auction of the year exceeded market expectations. Pension funds and life insurers were particularly large buyers as cash-rich institutions sought to find a home for their money. The institutions have particularly high liquidity at the moment and tend to favour long-term gilts which are a good match for long-term liabilities.

But economists said political uncertainty before the next election was likely to cast a cloud over the gilt-edged market in the next few months. The Bank of England said that the £3 billion 8 per cent gilt 2021 auction was covered two times. The average price accepted was 90.5, below the pre-bid close of 90.15, after last minute pressure for the price to be raised. The yield fell to two basis points and the price fell to 90.15. The average yield was 8.33 per cent.

KHD fraud complaint

KLOECKNER-HUMBOLDT-DEUTZ, the troubled German engineering firm, has filed a complaint against 15 people, including the deputy chairman, in a case of fraud that could cost the company DM650 million, prosecutors said yesterday. That is twice as high as KHD's total equity, making it difficult for Deutsche Bank, its main shareholder, to step in with financial assistance. Regine Appenrodt, the Cologne public prosecutor, said prosecutors were now investigating top KHD employees on suspicion of fraud and embezzlement. Three directors have been suspended.

MCA boosts Seagram

SEAGRAM, the wine and spirits group that last year bought MCA, the Hollywood studio, yesterday reported operating earnings of \$304 million, up 35 per cent, on revenues of \$2.5 billion in the quarter to April 30. The gain was entirely due to the inclusion of MCA, whose operating profits in the period were \$108 million, down 17 per cent. Profits from the core beverage division fell 9 per cent to \$148 million because of the soft market in North America. Seagram that said MCA's results were weaker because of significant investment spending in its music and recreation divisions.

DY Davies halts at 11p

SHARES in DY Davies, the troubled architectural services company, were suspended at 11p yesterday after directors asked NatWest, the principal bank, to appoint an administrative receiver. In April a number of subsidiaries of DY Davies were put into creditors' voluntary liquidation in an effort to protect other parts of the business but trading has continued to be difficult. The company lost £326,000 before tax in its last full financial year. Interim results, published in February, showed that half-year losses had risen to more than £1 million.

Texas chairman dies

JERRY JUNKINS, chairman of Texas Instruments, the American computer manufacturer, died yesterday of a heart attack during a business trip to Europe. Mr Junkins, 55, joined TI in 1959 and became president and chief executive officer in 1985 and chairman in 1988. The company said vice chairman Bill Mitchell and Pat Weber would oversee day-to-day operations for the near future. Mr Junkins was on the board of directors of Caterpillar Incorporated, Procter & Gamble and 3M. Trading in Texas shares was suspended after news of his death.

Rolls-Royce 'stronger'

ROLLS-ROYCE, the aero-engines to industrial power group, is continuing to strengthen its competitive position. Sir Ralph Robins, the chairman, told the annual meeting yesterday. Civil aviation was a long-term growth industry and the market was showing signs of recovery, while the defence aerospace business looked more stable, he said. Sir Ralph said 1995 had been a year of "significant progress" but said the group had to sustain the rate of progress to secure its position as an international leader in power systems. Rolls-Royce shares eased 1.2p to 228½p.

Carlisle to refocus

CARLISLE GROUP, the property investment company, said it is set to refocus on the nursing home sector with the appointment of Dev Pritchard, founder of Takare, the nursing home company, as joint chief executive. Mr Pritchard has agreed to invest up to £20.6 million in the company for new shares at 10.57p each. The company also announced a free bonus share on a one-for-four basis. Carlisle said year-end losses of £4.06 million were due to discontinued activities and write-downs. Losses were 2.6p a share, against earnings of 1.2p. There is again no dividend.

Senior partner denies backing Opposition

KPMG and Labour at odds again

By JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL REPORTER

KPMG, the accountancy firm, was at odds with the Labour Party again last night after Colin Sharman, its UK senior partner, denied backing the Opposition in an article published this month.

Tensions arose between KPMG and Labour last month when Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, accused several accountancy firms of giving clients misleading advice over the party's tax policies. KPMG cancelled a series of client seminars that it said had been misrepresented in the press. Writing in the

latest edition of *Renewal*, a Labour-supporting journal, Mr Sharman says Labour should be taken seriously by British business and backs much of Tony Blair's modernising reforms. He argues that business should not necessarily believe that only one party can govern Britain.

"From the leader of the party downwards, Labour politicians seem eager to listen, argue, present their policies and, crucially, seek professional advice," he says. "That must be welcome whatever political stance you take."

He says Tony Blair is master of his own party in a way that previous Labour leaders were not and has used that

strength to drive a policy agenda in tune with the latter part of the 20th century. "Business is now planning for the prospect of a government led by Blair and Brown rather than Major and Clarke in the next year."

Labour sources said last night that the article clearly showed that their message was getting across to business.

However, Mr Sharman denied that he was trying to repair relations with Labour. The article, he said, had been written and submitted in January, long before the dispute broke out. "I set out to produce a reasoned, balanced assessment," he said.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Rate	Rate
Australia \$	2.00	1.84
Austria Sch	17.47	15.97
Belgium Fr	51.11	46.81
Canada \$	2.182	2.032
Cyprus Cyp	0.754	0.686
Denmark Kr	9.82	8.82
Finland Mk	7.77	7.12
France Fr	6.55	7.70
Germany Dm	2.50	2.28
Greece Dr	385	380
Hong Kong \$	12.38	11.38
Ireland P	1.02	0.94
Israel Sh	5.57	4.72
Italy Lit	2684	2263
Japan Yen	178.00	162.80
Malta	0.591	0.536
Netherlands Gld	2.772	2.542
New Zealand \$	2.36	2.14
Norway Kr	10.25	9.75
Portugal Esc	201.50	222.00
S Africa R	7.22	6.42
Spain Ptas	202.00	189.00
Sweden Kr	10.62	10.16
Switzerland Fr	2.05	1.88
Turkey Lira	12299	11499
USA \$	1.615	1.483

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Healthy rise in Japanese output

FROM REUTER IN TOKYO

JAPAN announced a healthy increase in industrial output, reinforcing the view that a gradual economic recovery is continuing. But economists said the recovery had not gained sufficient momentum for Japan to alter its five-year policy of low interest rates.

The Trade Ministry reported that Japanese firms increased production by a preliminary 3.9 per cent in

April on the previous month, when the figure dipped 6.0 per cent.

Robust output of personal computers and cellular phones led the growth in April, but the ministry said many companies still held high excess stocks. The output data was largely as expected.

Tokyo financial markets shrugged off the news. There was moderate selling of Japa-

nese government bonds but this soon petered out. Masaru Takagi, chief economist at Fuji Research Institute, said: "Japan's industrial production is still in a good shape, but the speed of the recovery is slow."

"We have to say that we cannot see any strong economic expansion yet," he added, that the economy would continue to recover, at least until the summer, supported by

government stimulus packages. "But after this autumn, there is no guarantee that the economic recovery will continue."

The Bank of Japan has for the past five years adopted an easy monetary policy to support the economy, but financial market participants have speculated that it could start tightening its grip once the economy shows true strength.

Freightliner is sold to buyout

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

FREIGHTLINER, British Rail's £80 million a year container freight subsidiary, has been sold to a management buyout consortium backed by 3i and Electra

Fleming, the venture capital groups. The deal was secured after the Government agreed to inject £75 million into the loss-making company over five years to cover track access charges.

Freightliner operates from main deep sea ports such as Felixstowe, Southampton and Tilbury and carries about 20 per cent of Britain's containerised freight.

The company's 1,000 wagons carry freight containers to inland terminals, where they are collected by a fleet of 240 lorries.

David Rutherford, the managing director, who led the buyout team, said: "We are delighted to have won the opportunity of developing Freightliner into a first-class business."

"We believe it has a great future and we have ambitious plans in co-operation with our

customers and the ports community to increase volumes of freight on rail by over 50 per cent over the next few years."

The sale means that all but one of British Rail's freight operations have now been privatised. The exception is Rail Freight Distribution, the heavily loss-making international freight business.

The company operates freight trains through the Channel Tunnel and is believed to lose about £60 million a year.



Rutherford: expansion plans

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□ Why water bid taps are turned on □ Getting on board the milk float □ Bottom line on UK competitiveness

Transparent attractions

WATER was supposed to be the least attractive utility for predators. The regional companies were heavily regulated, and by their very nature monopolies with little scope to raise market share. Worst of all, they had to invest so much in improvements that borrowings went up each year. By contrast, telecommunications had huge potential to expand, while electricity had cash spilling out of its pockets.

As the third of ten water and sewerage groups prepares to lose its independence, this view looks outdated. The latest 15 per cent dividend rise from Anglian Water helps to explain why. Low risk plus above-average returns does not need a salesman to sell it.

The original case for water companies was simple. Since they had to invest more than £30 billion to clean up water, sewage and beaches, they had to be allowed a decent return to attract the necessary funds. The sheer size of the financing added to the attraction. On the long view taken by the regulator, customers had to pay for a lot of the investment up front, via the companies' profits, to avoid too great a strain on borrowing. Yet the water companies were entitled to earn a return on this as

well as investment they financed. Unless managers made a mess of things, for instance by failing to control their ambitious investment programmes, rising real dividends were virtually guaranteed. Until Yorkshire got its shower curtains in a twist last year, the only substantive complaints were about the real price increases allowed under the regime to fund investment.

Like Southern, Anglian continues to cut costs by more than the regulator required and is going to need to invest heavily for many years ahead. Even the meanest regulator could not reasonably put its shareholders on a British Gas-style starvation diet. It will also continue to enjoy hefty tax allowances.

The market, taking a far shorter view than the regulator, sees businesses that can stand far more borrowing than scheduled. Anglian, Welsh and others have been chivvied by City fund managers to deal out special dividends, buybacks or hand-outs of preference shares. The

combination of investment with guaranteed returns and tax allowances makes water companies a good good financial fit for any frustrated, cash-generating electricity company — or a baker or a candlestick maker, for that matter.

Whether water or electricity does the taking over is largely a matter of relative size. The multi-utility can be local, maximising cost savings, or cross-country, to spread the base for cross-selling other utility services. Either way, employees pay the costs.

Down on the farm

IT IS a scheme made for Brian Aldridge, a man well versed at picking his way through tortuous legislation in search of a money-making idea, but it is going to baffle the Grundy household. This is a shame, because the sums involved, between £5,000 and £10,000 per farmer, would mean more to the



Grundys of this world than any of the prosperous Archer clan.

The scheme in question is the flotation of Dairy Crest, the dairy products arm of the old Milk Marketing Board, after several false starts. This will bring to 28,000 farmers this unlooked-for bonus — provided they can understand the impenetrable literature arriving through their doors explaining it all.

The unwinding of the old MMB, a co-operative that has collected milk since the 1930s, was always going to be complicated. The MMB was effectively segmented in 1994 into Milk Marque, which continues

to collect from most farmers, and Dairy Crest, selling that milk and other products on to the supermarkets and with a share of the declining doorstep market.

As a co-operative, the MMB was owned by the farmers who had paid it a levy over the years, and the Dairy Crest flotation this summer is a way of ensuring that debt, now standing at £66 million, is repaid. According to their standing with the residuary body now handling the MMB's affairs, they will get shares, cash, or a mix of both.

Full details are not yet worked out, but institutions will be pulled in to hold 25 to 30 per cent of the equity. The residuary body is convinced that small farmers want Dairy Crest to remain independent, as a counterweight to the more powerful Unigate and Northern Foods owned Express Dairies. But Dairy Crest has attracted the interest of potential purchasers in the past, and a float would clean up the business neatly by stripping out those residual liabilities owed to

the farmers and leaving it open to a straight takeover bid. The farmers' loyalties might then be tested.

Middling through

BEHIND the arguments over the report on international competitiveness from the World Economic Forum lie some depressing home truths.

Competitiveness specialists — the subject has now inevitably spawned a mini-industry all of its own to analyse it — will argue about the relative methodology of that report and a similar one from the International Institute for Management Development earlier this week that showed Britain overtaken economically by Finland and Chile.

Today's findings from the WEF are, at least, less gloomy than that. But even so, in table after table, chart after chart, the WEF report shows that the UK's performance as deeply mediocre.

in anything from per capita GDP to the cost of domestic air travel, from inflation to home security.

The worst judgment is on investment. Out of 49 countries, Britain ranks second from bottom (only Sweden is worse) on gross domestic investment, and third from bottom on gross national savings. Business leaders and politicians fret endlessly about the investment gap, insisting that investment is the central key to future economic growth. If so, then the WEF's findings suggest Britain will occupy a middling, mediocre world ranking for many years yet.

Hopes derailed

FEW of the commuters on the London-Tilbury-Southend "Mystery Line" managed to double their money yesterday. This was left to the 22 institutions that backed its operator, Prism Rail, before an AIM float via a typical placing that left normal investors, including those commuters, scratching around in the after-market. When rail privatisation was initially mooted much was made of the chances to sell to enthusiasts and assorted anoraks, but the latter seem to have been left out in favour of the usual City suspects. A pity.

Carlton hints at organic growth

By ERIC REGULY

CARLTON Communications hinted strongly yesterday that it intends to grow organically and is unlikely to become a predator once new legislation easing media ownership takes effect later this year.

The comments came as Carlton announced a 19 per cent rise in pre-tax profits, to £143 million, in the half year to March 31. The better than expected figure led to increased forecasts for full-year profits.

Carlton's conservative stance suggests that it will not bid for HTV, the ITV company in the West of England and Wales, at the current market prices. The expectation of a free-for-all once the Broadcasting Bill is passed has pushed up the share prices of HTV and other small ITV companies in recent months. Carlton, which holds the ITV licences for the Midlands and London on week-

days, said that "many of our most tangible opportunities lie within our existing businesses, rather than beyond them".

Some analysts, however, said that Carlton probably intends to buy an additional ITV franchise and may have been simply "talking down the market" in the hopes that shares prices will fall.

HTV's other potential suitors are MAI, the financial services and media group that recently merged with United News & Media, and Granada. HTV shares lost 1p to 371p.

Carlton would not say whether its organic growth plans include buying TV sports rights. The FA Carling Premiership rights, the richest prize in TV sport, come on the market in June. A partnership formed by Carlton and Mirror Group is expected to bid against BSkyB, the satellite

broadcaster which is 40 per cent owned by News International, the owner of The Times, for the rights between 1997 and 2003.

Carlton's profits rise was almost entirely due to better performance from its non-broadcasting activities. Operating profits from broadcast television was flat at £61 million. Operating profits from video production and distribution were up 13 per cent to £37.1 million, while film and TV services gained 33 per cent to £26.3 million.

Overall operating profits were £140 million, up 14 per cent, on turnover that rose 6 per cent to £347.8 million. Earnings per share were 15.3p against 12.7p. The interim dividend, payable on August 23, rises 17.5 per cent to 4.37p.

Tempus, page 28

Betterware lifted by special payout

By PHILIP PANGALOS

SHARES in Betterware jumped 6½p to 98½p after the door-to-door housewares retailer accompanied a recovery in full-year profits with plans to return some of its £10.3 million net cash pile through a 2.6p special dividend.

Organic growth helped Betterware to report pre-tax profits of £9.29 million in the 53-week period to March 2, compared with £1.01 million last time. Profits were boosted by a £1.1 million exceptional gain relating to VAT overpaid in earlier years, compared with an exceptional loss of £3.5 million last time. Turnover from the core direct-selling business grew by 10 per cent to £55 million, with the UK up 7 per cent and overseas operations ahead 39 per cent.

Andrew Cohen, chairman, expects overseas operations to grow from about 10 per cent of group turnover to more than 50 per cent within five to seven years. He said: "The momen-



Andrew Cohen: optimistic

turn of last year has continued ... with the group trading around 10 per cent ahead of the previous year. We've had a very strong first quarter and the initiatives we took last year are bearing fruit."

There is a maintained final dividend of 1.75p, payable on July 22, giving an increased total of 5.2p (2.6p). Earnings before one-offs rose 50 per cent to 5.2p (3.5p) a share.

Hiscox in Economic takeover

HISCOX Dedicated Insurance Fund is acquiring Economic Insurance, the regional insurance company, for £30.07 million.

The company also intends to acquire the 75 per cent of Hiscox Holdings it does not already own for £33.1 million.

The two deals will be funded partly by a £54.6 million open offer. Investors are offered one new share for each share held at 115p. Existing shares were unchanged at 138p.

The enlarged group, to be renamed Hiscox plc, will comprise of an insurance company with more than £500 million of gross written premiums and 370 staff. Robert Hiscox, chairman of Hiscox Holdings and a director of Hiscox Dedicated, said: "We will be able to take advantage of opportunities in the Lloyd's market and the company market."

Granada rejects £1bn Forte offer

By ERIC REGULY

SIR ROCCO FORTE's effort to buy back the hotel chains he lost in his battle with Granada failed yesterday when Granada rejected his offer.

Sir Rocco, the former chief executive of the Forte hotels and restaurants group, last week offered about £1 billion for some of the hotels in the Exclusive chain and most of the hotels in the Meridien chain. During the takeover battle, Forte valued all the properties in both groups at about £1.6 billion.

Granada, whose chief executive is Gerry Robinson, announced last week that it would sell the Exclusive hotels individually or in small groups, but would keep the Meridien because it had considerable potential for profit improvement.

The Exclusives include Brown's and the Hyde Park in London and the Eden in Rome. The 85 Meridien hotels are a notch below the

Exclusives and are spread all over the world.

Sir Rocco said he did not want to buy the Exclusives alone and made an unsolicited offer for both chains, with the exception of some hotels. It is known that he was not interested in buying the Grosvenor House hotel in London, which accounts for about one-quarter of the value of the Exclusive chain, or the George V in Paris, which requires substantial improvements.

He said: "We secured substantial debt and equity funding to make our bid, and I am sorry that Granada has decided not to follow up on what we consider to be a good offer."

It does not appear that Sir Rocco will increase his offer. He said he will look for other opportunities in the hotels and leisure sector. With funding already in place from JP Morgan, Citicorp and others, he may be able to move quickly.

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OUR INTEREST RATES		
Balance	Gross CAR %*	Gross %*
£250,000 +	5.64	5.50
£100,000 - £249,999	4.59	4.50
£25,000 - £99,999	3.56	3.50
£2,500 - £24,999	3.04	3.00

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First 20 cheques in month	FREE
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Cheques lodged by post	FREE
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Automated Credits	FREE

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* Gross - paid without deduction of basic rate income tax to those who qualify. * CAR (compounded annual rate) - the gross rate adjusted to show annual rate effectively received if interest remained in the account and itself earned interest. Rates shown correct at time of going to press - but subject to variation.

IT PAYS TO TALK

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Robin Gourlay, left, and Alan Smith of Anglian Water

Southern offers open floodgates on sector

CITY speculators have begun slaking their thirst on the water companies as the prospect of an expensive and drawn-out battle for control of Southern Water appears to be on the cards.

Yesterday Southern Water agreed terms of a £1.6 billion offer from Scottish Power, its local electricity supplier. It tops a previous offer from Scottish Power valuing it at £1.56 billion. The comparable offers per share are £10.13 from Southern Electric and 94.5p from Scottish Power.

Southern Water shares reacted to the news with a rise of 46p to 987p.

It is unlikely that either bid will create any problems for either of the regulators, which have already approved mergers such as Norweb and North West Electricity creating United Utilities, 4p dearer at 595p. Brokers must now wait to see if Scottish Power, up 6p at 325p, decides to top the offer from Southern Electric, down 19p at 707p.

The rest of the water companies were marked sharply higher as the speculators singled out those most vulnerable to a bid.

Anglian Water, whose chairman is Robin Gourlay, touched 623p before retreating to end the session 27p higher at 599p.

Alan Smith, managing director, spent most of the morning denying claims that his company had already received a takeover approach. He went on record as the group posted a rise in pre-tax profits during the first six months of the year, from £216 million to £238.6 million.

Other water companies on the move included Mid Kent Water, up 7p at 435p, and South West Water, 8p firmer at 671p. Both companies have received bid approaches which are now lodged with the Monopolies and Mergers Commission and both are due to unveil figures later today.

South Staffordshire Water climbed 47p to £25.15, with Severn Trent 3p higher at 95p. Hyder 11p to 76p, Thames 35p to 599p, and Yorkshire Water 68p at 758p.

The rest of the equity market shrugged off Wall Street's 50-point fall overnight, cheered by the success of the latest gilt auction and the takeover speculation. An initial markdown was quickly wiped out as selective support for the takeover favourites led



Robin Gourlay, left, and Alan Smith of Anglian Water

the bears on the run. But the buyers' nerves got into full swing and this was reflected in the low levels of turnover, with only 714 million shares traded. Even so, the FT-SE 100 index closed near its best of the day with a rise of 155 points at 3,775.7.

Among the leaders, BT was again driven high on the back of this week's buy recommen-

Cadbury Schweppes has slumped from a peak of 561p. Yesterday the price stood out with a rise of 10p to 488p on turnover of almost 4 million shares. Two brokers, ABN Amro Hoare Govett and Societe Generale Strauss Turnbull, take the view the shares have fallen far enough and rate them a buy.

dation from Morgan Stanley, the US securities house, finishing 81p better at 348p. A total of nine million shares were traded by the close.

Vodafone, the mobile telephone network operator, continued to benefit from a major review recommending the shares from ABN Amro Hoare Govett, the broker, with the price adding 5p at 258p. Jim Ross, of Hoare, says

speculation that Richmond, its parent company, will snap up the remaining third it does not already own.

Half-year figures at the top end of expectations lifted Carlton, owner of the London and Midlands independent television broadcasting franchises, 3p to 481p. Pre-tax profits came in at £143.1 million compared with £120.1 million last time, with brokers

forecasting up to £300 million for the full year. The company says advertising revenue should benefit in the second half from the launch of Channel 5 and the Euro '96 football championship.

Another company expected to benefit from Euro '96 is JTB Sports, the fast-growing sportsbook retailer. The price surged 45p to a record high of 800p, with parents expected to delve deep into their pockets this summer to pay for replica kits of the most popular teams.

Betterware, the door-to-door sales company, confirmed brokers' expectations that it is back on the road to recovery with a rise of 61p to 981p. It followed full-year pre-tax profits up from £1 million to £9.3 million. The shares have more than doubled in the past year.

Kalamazoo Computer Group surged 28p to 143p after announcing plans to splash out £22 million on EADS, Europe's biggest supplier of computer management systems.

To help to finance the deal, Kalamazoo is arranging a placing and open offer of new shares at 103p. It has also forecast a £1 million drop in profits sweetened by a rise in the dividend.

There was a positive start to trading in shares of Recognition Systems Group, the software specialist, following a placing by Albert E. Sharp, the broker, at 70p. The price started life at 90p before closing at 110p, a premium of 40p.

■ **GILT-EDGED:** The market gave a sigh of relief after the latest auction of £3 billion of Treasury 8 per cent 2021 was 2.04 times oversubscribed. The market also reacted positively to the news of a cut in Cheltenham & Gloucester's mortgage rate. The gains were not held and small losses were eventually recorded across the board.

There was heavy turnover in the futures pit, with 103,000 contracts completed as the June series of the long gilt fell three ticks to £106 1/2.

In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 shed a tick at 97 3/4 as did Treasury 8 per cent 2000 at the shorter end, which closed at £102 3/4.

■ **NEW YORK:** Investors held back in early trading on Wall Street and by midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 6.28 points lower at 5,703.39.

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MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 5703.39 (-6.28)
S&P Composite 672.57 (-0.34)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 2202.50 (+76.97)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 11300.56 (+93.54)

Amsterdam:
EEX Index 566.72 (+1.38)

Sydney:
AO 2284.2 (+1.5)

Frankfurt:
DAX 2551.45 (+6.85)

Singapore:
Straits 2334.42 (+22.43)

Brussels:
General 9424.03 (+53.24)

Paris:
CAC-40 2117.10 (+15.80)

Zurich:
SIX 286.10 (-4.88)

London:
FT 30 3786.9 (+13.3)
FT 100 3775.7 (+15.3)
FT-SE Mid 250 4514.2 (+10.4)
FT-SE 250 4514.2 (+10.4)
FT-SE Europe 100 1692.0 (+7.17)
FT A-All-Share 1696.20 (+6.4)
FT Non Financials 2019.01 (+6.08)
FT Fixed Interest 111.75 (-0.11)
FT Govt Secs 92.34 (-0.02)
Bulgaria 3420
SEAQ Volume 714,300
USM (Daxsmm) 231.01 (+0.24)
US\$ 1.5189 (+0.0007)
German Mark 2.3472 (-0.0002)
Exchange Index 85.4 (+0.3)
Bank of England official rate (4pm) 1.2300
ESBR 1.0028
RPI 1526 Apr (2.4%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX 1520 Apr (2.9%) Jan 1987=100

RECEIPTS

AIM Trust 101 ...
Aberforth Sml 102 ...
Atlantis Japan Gln 683 ...
Biocompatibles US 130 ...
CA Counts (105) 118 ...
Epic Multimedia 101 + 8
Gartmore Select Jap 92 ...
Hercules Prop Svcs 60 - 5
INVESTCO Eng Int 101 ...
Just Group 5 ...
La Senza (150) 153 - 2
Lunatic (200) 230 - 1
Malden Group 181 - 5
Premiere Group 133 ...
Prism Rail 205 ...
Railtrack (190) 214p ...
Recognition Sys 110 ...
Renaissance US 98 - 3
Schroder Venture 195 ...
Stentor (72) 113 + 10
Taiwan Inv Tst C 96 ...
Thomas Potts 14 - 1
Tom Hoskins 53 ...
Vanguard Medica 615 ...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Chelsfield n/p (220) 37 + 1
Istock n/p (55) 34 - 1
Pomeroy n/p (34) 5 ...
Proteus Int n/p (45) 26 ...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISKS:
Kalamazoo 143p (+28p)
Monarch 127p (+17p)
Silentnight 257p (+28p)
Black Less 180p (+17p)
Castings 228p (+13p)
JTB Sports 800p (+45p)
Vendome 645p (+18p)

FALLS:
ABOS 194p (-12p)
Pope (Midweek) 305p (-15p)
MAD 314p (-15p)
Photobank 353p (-13p)
Micro Focus 930p (-33p)

Closing Prices Page 32

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso 1.5170-1.5196
Australia dollar 1.8971-1.8992
Belgian franc 0.5690-0.5700
Brazil real 0.4836-0.4877
Chinese yuan 0.7120-0.7130
Euro 1.6360-1.6370
Finland markka 1.7575-1.7585
Greek drachma 1.7440-1.7450
Hong Kong dollar 52.92-53.98
Indonesia rupiah 160.00-160.50
Italian lire 1.3600-1.3650
Japanese yen 163.00-163.50
Malaysia ringgit 2.3796-2.3798
Mexican peso 2.31-2.32
New Zealand dollar 0.7278-0.7288
Pakistan rupee 52.75-52.85
Saudi Arabian riyal 5.4525-5.5000
Singapore dollar 0.6900-0.6910
South African rand 6.6180-6.6200
U A E dirham 3.5025-3.5200
Bereading Bank GTS - Lloyds Bank

FT-SE 100

FT-SE 250

Three Month Sterling

Three Month Euro Yen

Three Month Euro DM

Long Gilt

Japanese Govt Bond

German Govt Bond

Three Month ECU

Swiss Franc

Italian Govt Bond

Prime Bank Bills (Only)

Overnight: open 5%, close 5%

Local Authority Deps

Securitised CDs

Banking CDs

Building Society CDs

Currency

Dollar

Deutsche Mark

Swiss Franc

Yen

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency

Dollar

Deutsche Mark

Swiss Franc

Yen

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bellon: Open \$391.90-392.20 Close \$391.00-391.50 High \$391.90-392.20

Low \$390.05-390.55 AM: \$391.65 PM: \$391.00

Platinum \$400.25-401.25 Silver \$5.36-5.37 Palladium \$1320-1330

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mid Rates for May 20

Range

Close

1 month

3 month

6 month

Call

5-6

5-6

5-6

5-6

5-6

TEMPUS

High tide at Worthing

PERHAPS Southern Electric can be forgiven for acting in haste. The utilities sector is fast moving and many of its members are driven by instinct, fearing they will be left behind in the rush. First Southern Electric was extolling the virtues of vertical integration to its shareholders when it recommended the now outlived National Power bid.

Now Southern Electric is declaring the benefits of horizontal integration with Southern Water in an effort to trump Tuesday's water bid by Scottish Power. The Scottish bid demands a swift response from Southern Electric which must have looked with horror on what would happen in 1998 when it would be fighting competition in gas and electricity with a super-utility on the doorstep.

Now Southern Electric justifies this move with cost savings and integration. Some £45

million is likely to be saved each year by the fusion of duplicated activities and the shedding of staff. The geographical fit of the two is not the best, with 40 per cent of Worthing-based Southern Water's area shared by Southern Electric, but it makes sense.

The full price Southern Electric is prepared to pay for its water neighbour will leave it with a gearing of 130 per cent. Such a level can be seen as over-reaching and it will certainly not help the company enter the competitive markets with a bang.

Southern Water shareholders will be laughing while those of Southern Electric can feel nothing but hemmed in. Maybe a new bidder for the electricity company will come to their rescue. Southern Electric - at 707p a share last night against the National Power offer of 960p - is certainly looking cheap.

Carlton

IN SPITE of strong organic growth in the second half, it is hard to imagine Carlton Communications will outperform the market over the next few years unless it starts to take bold steps.

ITV viewership is on the wane. The BBC is going through a renaissance, winning cable and satellite viewers are rising. The trend will inevitably erode ITV advertising revenue and, in turn, the value of ITV licences.

There are a couple of solutions. One is to reduce unit costs by taking more of the market. The new Broadcasting Act will trigger consolidation, eventually reducing the number of players to two or three. HTV in the West of England and Wales, seems the natural

Dawson

DAWSON'S fortunes have been unravelling for some time. But just as shareholders dared to believe the group had begun to be knitted together, the wool has become entangled.

There was little cheer to be gained from yesterday's results, especially for shareholders who supported the group's 1994 rescue rights issued at 120p, compared with yesterday's closing of 57p.

Last year's sharp rise in raw material prices, coupled with a reluctance of customers to part with their cash and the costly process of cutting stock levels, all took their toll. Profits were also dented by another, smaller, round of exceptional charges.

The £20 million decline in operating profits from continuing operations is too much to blame solely on market conditions. Dawson is, however, restructuring, which at the best of times can prove disruptive. The prob-

prey for Carlton, while York-

shire Tyne Tees TV will no doubt fall to Granada.

The other solution is to increase dramatically the number of distribution outlets. While Carlton is expanding its portfolio of channels, it still has a long way to go and should consider taking on an international partner to get broad expo-

sure to as many English-language markets as possible.

Michael Green, Carlton's boss, is conservative by nature and the strategy has worked well for him so far. But for the long-term health of his company, he should become far more aggressive, even if it risks gearing up the balance sheet.

As if to bear this out, a common theme from the French and British co-chairmen on the debt talks with the banks would be settled appeared impossible. Patrick Ronsolle, in the French corner, said he was still hoping to announce agreement in principle with the banks at the June 27 shareholders' meeting.

In the British corner, Sir Alastair Morton said that he felt sure of an accord with the banks by the end of 1996, most likely during the summer. Sir Alastair plans to retire once an agreement with the banks has been reached. "I would like to announce the date of my departure in June, but I don't think I will," he said.

Shareholders in Euro-

tunnel, who are already awaiting news of a refinancing of their company, must have blanched when they heard the news. Eurotunnel maintains, however, that the new summer tariffs will not

leem is that the group is not reaping the benefits as quickly as it would like.

While the recently appointed chairman is still in his honeymoon period, the battle to restore Dawson's fortunes is proving far from easy. Until tangible evidence of a recovery emerges, the shares should be avoided.

Eurotunnel

ANOTHER summer in the Channel and already broadside are flying between the ferry companies and Eurotunnel. Yesterday Eurotunnel halved the economy price of taking a car on Le Shuttle from £266 to £129. Stena Line, meanwhile, threatened to become even more competitive.

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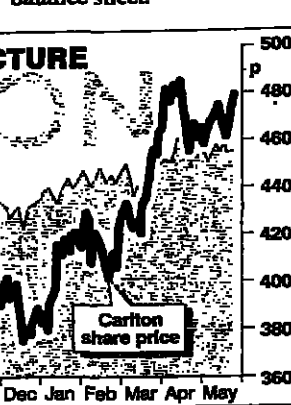
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May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May

FT-SE 100 share price (rebased)

Carlton share price

Source: DataStream

May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May

FT-SE 100 share price (rebased)

Carlton share price

Source: DataStream

May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May

FT-SE 100 share price (rebased)

Carlton share price

Source: DataStream

May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May

FT-SE 100 share price (rebased)

Carlton share price

Source: DataStream

May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May

THE TIMES
CITY DIARY

Well-travelled messenger

DAVID BURNSIDE'S muddy shoes have been filled at last, by 41-year-old Kevin Murray. As the new voice of British Airways, the current director of corporate affairs for AEA Technology has certainly travelled. Born in Zimbabwe and brought up in Zambia, Murray climbed his way to become air correspondent for *The Star*, Johannesburg, before moving into PR.

The news came as a surprise to BA staff, not least Peter Jones, acting director of public affairs for more than six months, who was on holiday yesterday. Mr Jones will, however, stay on board, reporting to Mr Murray.

No impediment

THE star turn at yesterday's Prudential AGM was Bernard Harris, the shareholder who stood up to ask: "In the light of recent legislation in Hawaii to allow marriages between people of the same sex... has the board of the Prudential put in any consideration to amending its policies to cover marriages between husband and husband, or wife and wife?" Sir Martin Jacob, Pru chairman, fixed him with a stare. "To be honest, on the question of whether we have given any consideration to this issue, the answer is no. But let me assure you, I will consider it."



"It's no longer known as the misery line"

Dry dale woe

YORKSHIRE'S tourism industry is the latest victim of Yorkshire Water's mis-handling of the county's water crisis. Ryedale Tourist Association warned local MP John Greenway yesterday that tourists are arriving in the county expecting to find a desert. According to Keith Hartwell, owner of the Balmoral Hotel, Harrogate: "Many tourists have been cancelling bookings because they fear there will be no water. Others who do arrive think water will be rationed, and that they'll have to wash in buckets."

RED-FACED Paul Seymour, chairman of the Continuing Care Conference, was juggling bottles of red and white wine yesterday, while chewing on a Havana. Recalling memories of his mis-spent youth, Seymour boasted that he once bet the barman at Cranfield College he could knock back 21 pints. After 17, Seymour had to call a halt, when three nurses lured him on to the dance floor.

MORAG PRESTON

The truth is buried in the small print

Praise for Britain's economic policies ought not to be taken at face value

Isn't it one of life's glorious little ironies that, just as John Major is trying his best to make Britain look silly and incompetent by warring with Europe over beef, he is told by two well-respected groups of economists that Britain's policies are superior to those of our continental European competitors. In Paris last week, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development extolled Britain — along with New Zealand — for making the most progress on reducing structural rigidities in the labour market and therefore producing "encouraging signs of a fall in structural unemployment". The OECD's latest report on Britain is out later today and is expected to downgrade Britain's growth prospects this year because of the Maastricht-inspired slowdown in continental European economies. However, on the positive side there will be further praise of Britain's labour market reforms.

Britain's devotion to free market economic policies receives even greater endorsement today by the World Economic Forum, the Davos economic think-tank. Britain this year nudges up to fifteenth place in the Forum's World Competitiveness League from eighteenth last year. It is, surprisingly, placed well above both Germany and France.

Should all this unaccustomed praise for Britain's handling of her economy be taken at face value? Of course not. There are, no doubt, healthy debates within each organisation, but both are prisoners of well-established economic orthodoxies.

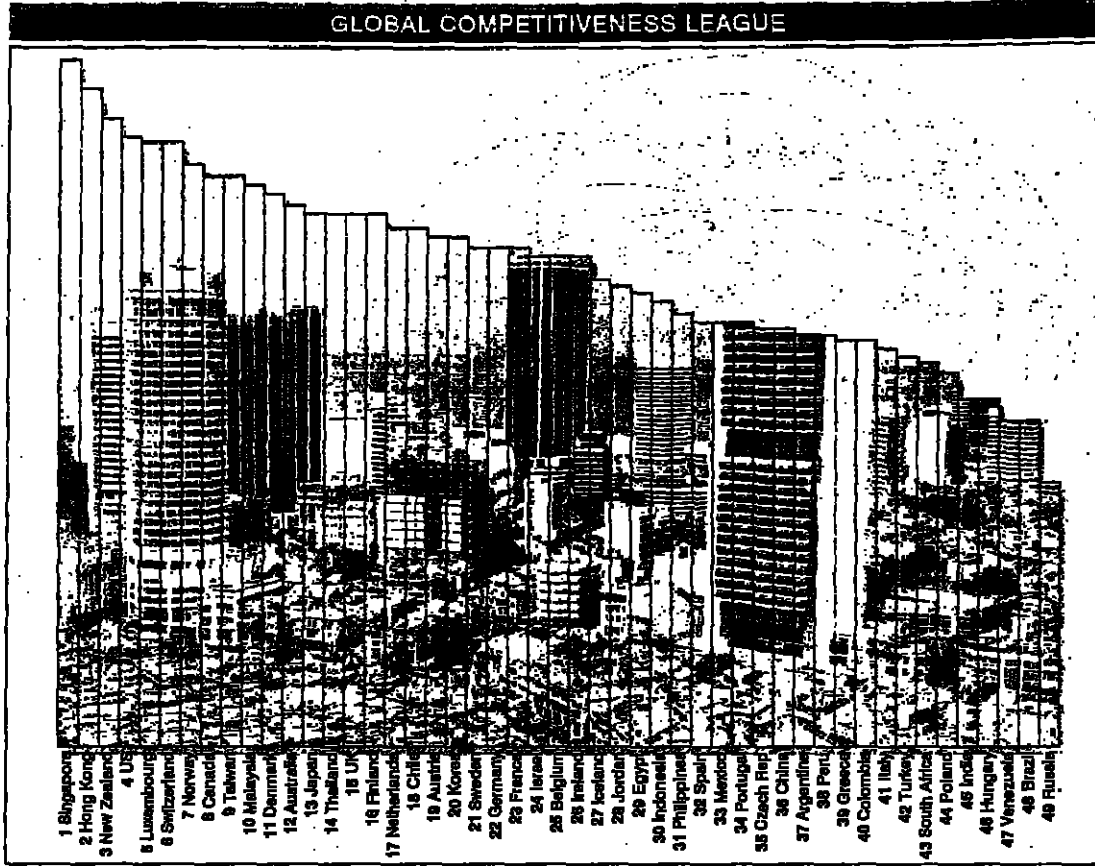
The OECD is actually doing some intelligent and balanced work on how to tackle unemployment. But its analysis — at least that for public consumption — still comes down

heavily in favour of Anglo-Saxon-style flexibility. The Government is sure to focus on praise of labour market reforms. But little will appear of the private discussions between OECD and British officials in which concerns were expressed about widening income disparities and poverty — the rather inconvenient flip side of flexibility. (The OECD always defers somewhat to the political sensitivities of its subject countries, not least because of their contributions to its lavish operation in Paris.)

Actually, the OECD is suffering from ideological entrapment on a far grander scale. It still insists on worrying about inflation and balancing budgets to the exclusion of all else. This accounted for an astonishing blank spot at last week's annual meeting. Officials talked incessantly about how to create jobs, but insisted that European governments go on cutting deficits to the Maastricht timetable. Nobody wanted to admit the blindingly obvious link between a massive over-ordinated deflation and rising joblessness.

The OECD probably tries to please too many masters. But the World Economic Forum seems to have discovered a particularly virulent form of religion. It has completely changed its methodology of calculating competitiveness (which means Britain's fifteenth and eighteenth places are not strictly comparable). This year's method is weighted far more heavily in favour of countries with free market policies.

The biggest virtues are given to openness to international trade and finance, the depth of financial markets, the flexibility of the domestic labour market and quality of government. This last category is biased



towards those who intervene less, tax less and spend less.

One could hardly choose three measures of competitiveness which would suit the current British Government better. Pace those who think we still have to put up with a meddlesome government and pay too much tax, the Forum's view of the world has moved so close to this Government's that it must count as something of a disappointment that Britain has only moved up three steps from last year's calculation.

Mr Major's party will no doubt be jumping up and down with glee

today, but nobody can describe this report as objective. In the state interference sub-category, Britain is sixth-best in the world for "not hindering the development of business". It is hard to know how on earth that can be calculated and perhaps one shouldn't really attempt such an exercise.

Should we really take seriously an analysis which places France and Germany below Chile, Finland, Hong Kong and — yes — Britain in a competitiveness league. The Forum says of Europe's largest economy: "Germany, the economic power-

house of the European Union, does no better than twenty-second, consistent with the ill mood in Germany today, as the so-called social partners debate the downsizing of the German welfare state." The contempt in the phrase "so-called social partners" leaves no doubt about the ideological bias here.

The sight of the OECD and the World Economic Forum clinging ever more earnestly to the free market, Anglo-Saxon model is an unexpected bonus for John Major, but bewildering in a wider context. The Forum argues that its free

market bias is based on the results of the academic findings of the past few years. This is a highly selective view of the available literature. Attitudes are changing.

Stephen Roach, the chief economist of Morgan Stanley and the man who advocated corporate downsizing as the key to increasing American competitiveness has recently cut his own ties with his workforce. Lifetime learning is becoming a popular concept. America is thinking about raising its minimum wage. Joseph Stiglitz, chairman of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers, talks about "security of employability".

A middle course is being plotted between opposing ideologies. The OECD, for all its silliness on EMU, is part of that process. So too is the trade union advisory committee to the OECD which advocates an adaptable, rather than flexible, labour market. But is Britain changing with the debate?

When ministers applaud the Forum's findings today, they should be aware of the small print. In the labour category, Britain comes thirty-fourth out of 48 for its ability to supply skilled labour; thirty-fifth for an education system which meets the needs of a competitive economy; fortieth for in-company training. But we are fourth best at hiring and firing, fifth best at restructuring our workforces (this usually means making people redundant) and eleventh best for avoiding the social costs of employment (informal, under-the-table work contracts to avoid National Insurance, sick pay, holiday pay, etc.).

In the straightforward category of gross domestic investment as a percentage of gross domestic product, Britain comes forty-eighth out of 49. Well, that nails the argument. We really must be superior to Germany and France.

Corner shops share jackpot with giants

Jon Ashworth checks out the commission being earned by retailers, large and small

Tesco, Sainsbury, and other big supermarket groups are earning millions of pounds in commission on National Lottery sales.

They join newsgagents, garages and independent corner shops in an enterprise that has boosted cash flow and seen overall trade increase by as much as 25 per cent. The only sour note is struck by the hundreds of retailers who claim they are being barred from the Camelot network.

More than £350 million has been paid out in commission so far. National Lottery outlets earn 5 per cent on ticket sales along with 1 per cent on prizes paid out in cash. Multiples sell an average of £14,750 in lottery tickets each week. Commission over the entire year works out at about £39,000 per outlet.

More than half of all lottery tickets are sold on Saturday, typically in big supermarkets, where punters buy a ticket along with the weekly shop. The most successful online outlets include Tesco in Watlington Cross and Morrisons in Bishop Auckland.

The sure groups concede that the lottery has provided extra income, but say that having Camelot terminals makes little difference to overall sales. J Sainsbury said: "Sales are very good, but people are coming in anyway."

There is also the additional expense of hiring staff to operate the Camelot kiosks. Sainsbury will not disclose how much it is making from the lottery. However, its 230 online terminals could be generating £9 million a year or more in commission. Camelot says independent chains sell an average of £4,500 in tickets a week, generating about £11,900 a year in commission.

A typical corner shop reports weekly sales of £3,350, and earns an average of £8,894 a year in commission.

T&S Stores, whose 814 outlets include Dillons newsgagents, is generating more than £2 million a week in lottery sales. Jim McCarthy, chief executive, said: "The lottery has become a very important part of our retail offer."

Successful independents include Surendra Patel and his wife, Arvindaben, who run a newsgagents in Hemel Hempstead. Mr Patel earns an average of £450 a week in commission from lottery sales and has seen a 15 per cent increase in general sales.

Mr Patel says the lottery helped to compensate for the arrival of a Tesco store. He said: "Our turnover had fallen by 20-25 per cent. Now it is only a little bit down. The lottery has given us life."

The real benefits to retailers lie in the volume of ticket sales, according to Mintel, the market analyst. A grocery and newsgagents chain with 200 terminals could be expected to boost its operating income by up to £2 million in commission, and a supermarket multiple with a similar number of terminals by half as much again. Mintel says: "These sums are considerable and, despite cost implications, represent an important source of income."

is, spending on the lottery has displaced spending that would otherwise have been spent on retail goods. Last year, retail sales grew by just 1.4 per cent, which compares with growth in services spending of nearly 3.4 per cent. Mr Cates says that higher interest rates and exchange rate depreciation also had a bearing.

THE OTHER LOTTERY MILLIONAIRES



Surendra Patel and his wife, Arvindaben, saw a rise in sales

All smiles at the Treasury

The amounts in sales and prizes are greater than anyone predicted, but is the economy better off? Observers say the lottery's impact on spending in the economy has been negligible in spite of the vast sums being diverted into tickets.

Lottery sales average about £90 million a week, or more than 3 per cent of the weekly value of total retail sales, according to Andrew Cates, UK economist at UBS. Government statisticians assume that half the money spent on the lottery is returned as prizes, and as such is simply a transfer from one person to another. The other half goes as spending on betting and gaming, an addition to total consumer spending but not to retail sales.

One effect of the lottery has been to shift expenditure away from goods included in retail sales towards "services" included in consumers' expenditure. That

is, spending on the lottery has displaced spending that would otherwise have been spent on retail goods. Last year, retail sales grew by just 1.4 per cent, which compares with growth in services spending of nearly 3.4 per cent. Mr Cates says that higher interest rates and exchange rate depreciation also had a bearing.

The lottery's effect on total spending in the economy has probably been pretty negligible, although it is hard to determine the precise impact. About half of the total prize money is returned in amounts typically of less than £100 per winner, and it is likely that much of this is immediately re-spent. But almost half the prize money is paid out in amounts of greater than £100,000, and most of this is probably saved.

Assuming that half the money spent on the lottery, displaced spending on substi-

utes, and that a third of all prize money has so far been re-spent, total consumer spending was perhaps boosted 0.1 per cent as a direct result of the lottery's introduction last year. To the extent that most of this expenditure was simply a transfer between the personal sector and the public sector, there has been very little impact on overall economic activity.

In spite of this neutral impact, the lottery's introduction has undoubtedly given rise to winners and losers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the losers have been other forms of gambling, leisure spending and possibly donations to charity.

One important winner has been the Treasury. This is because delays in contributing money to the good causes have boosted general government receipts, flattening the PSBR by more than £1 billion in 1995.

Bands hit winning note

Boosey & Hawkes is an obvious destination for the thousands of pounds in lottery money devoted to brass bands, but has it made that much difference? Richard Holland, chief executive, recently admitted that the lottery had played a part in driving up profits at the instrument division, which reported sales of £64.4 million last year, a 6 per cent increase. However, the company has been backpedalling since then, claiming it has made little difference to overall sales.

David Humphries, managing director of the instrument division, played down the lottery's impact. He said: "Yes, it's great, and orders from anywhere help, but one can't get it out of proportion. Nine per cent of our brass instruments are exported."

Competitors, however, are less charitable about Boosey & Hawkes' dominance of the market. One said: "The message from our men on the road is it would be easier for the lottery to give the money straight to Boosey & Hawkes."

Not all the money ends up being spent on instruments — van and coachbuilders have their share — but the amounts nevertheless run into hundreds of thousands of pounds.

In last week's funding round by the Arts Council of England, £440,000 out of a total of £28.2 million, 1.5 per cent, was set aside for musical instruments. That compares with previous "brass band" tranches of £454,632, £371,708 and £280,380. More than 80 brass and silver bands in England have benefited, although bodies such as the Music Industries Association say that not enough lottery money is being used to buy instruments for schools.

Musical instruments are not the only focus. Mercedes Benz has reported a run of interest from touring theatre companies in its eight-seater Megavans, which costs about £55,000 including VAT, in its converted form, and comes equipped with wheelchair lift and automatic gearboxes.

One London troupe, Quicksilver Theatre for Children, persuaded Mercedes to contribute 10 per cent of the cost of a van, with the balance coming from the lottery. Mercedes has sold ten Megavans so far, with quotes requested on several more. Demand is expected to grow as more funds are released.

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Dawson hit by higher raw material costs

By Sarah Bagnall

DAWSON International yesterday blamed higher raw material costs, lacklustre consumer demand, and adverse trading conditions in America for a 60 per cent drop in underlying pre-tax profits to £9.4 million in the year to March 30.

Profits before tax and exceptional items fell from £24.1 million in the 53 weeks in the previous year. Derek Finlay, chairman, said: "The industry

faces some of the most difficult trading conditions in living memory." The decline in profits was on the back of a 24.4 per cent fall in total sales to £331.1 million and a 7.4 per cent fall in sales from continuing operations to £304.1 million.

Including net exceptional costs of £5.5 million, against a profit of £400,000 last time, pre-tax profits rose from £1.7 million to £3.9 million. Mr Finlay said the group's ongoing restructuring, which has resulted in

the disposal of non-core businesses and the culling of nearly 1,000 jobs, was on course and beginning to produce benefits. He added that the order books were generally stronger than at this time last year.

Operating profits from continuing operations crashed £20.7 million to £15 million because of declining fortunes in virtually all the group's divisions. The three UK apparel operations saw pre-exceptional operating losses deteriorate from £3.6

million to £6.9 million as weak consumer demand together with increased cashmere garment prices took their toll. Sales fell 15 per cent to £89.4 million. The bulk of the division's loss was down to the Pringle knitwear business, which suffered from falling margins.

Excluding exceptional charges, the group's fibres and yarns division saw profits fall £7.9 million to £10.9 million on sales 10 per cent lower at £93.9 million. Similarly, the fabrics

business saw profits fall by nearly two-thirds to £2.5 million. The US apparel business also suffered as profits fell from £13.2 million to £8.7 million on sales down slightly at £100.5 million.

The final dividend was held at 1.5p, making an unchanged total for the year of 3p. The final dividend, due on August 13, is payable out of continuing earnings per share of 4.1p.

Tempus, page 28

Politicking puts £1bn LG project in jeopardy

By George Sivel

POLITICAL infighting appears to be jeopardising a £1 billion investment in Britain by LG, one of the big four conglomerates that dominate the South Korean economy. The investment would create 4,000 jobs in a depressed area of Britain.

Sources close to the project believe that the Korean company is growing tired of what it sees as infighting between politicians representing Wales and Scotland, who are both vying for the project.

There is some political posturing going on which is getting in the way of the question of LG's inward investment in the UK, one source said. He added that there were "unhelpful" signs of tension between William Hague, the Welsh Secretary, and Michael Forsyth, his Scottish counterpart, both of whom would gain political kudos by securing the investment for their respective regions.

According to an authoritative report by the BBC's *Nine O'Clock News* several weeks ago, LG, formerly known as Lucky Goldstar, was on the point of going ahead with the project at a site in Wales on the banks of the River Severn. Previously it had been apparent that LG wanted to build a semiconductor plant in Britain but was still deciding from

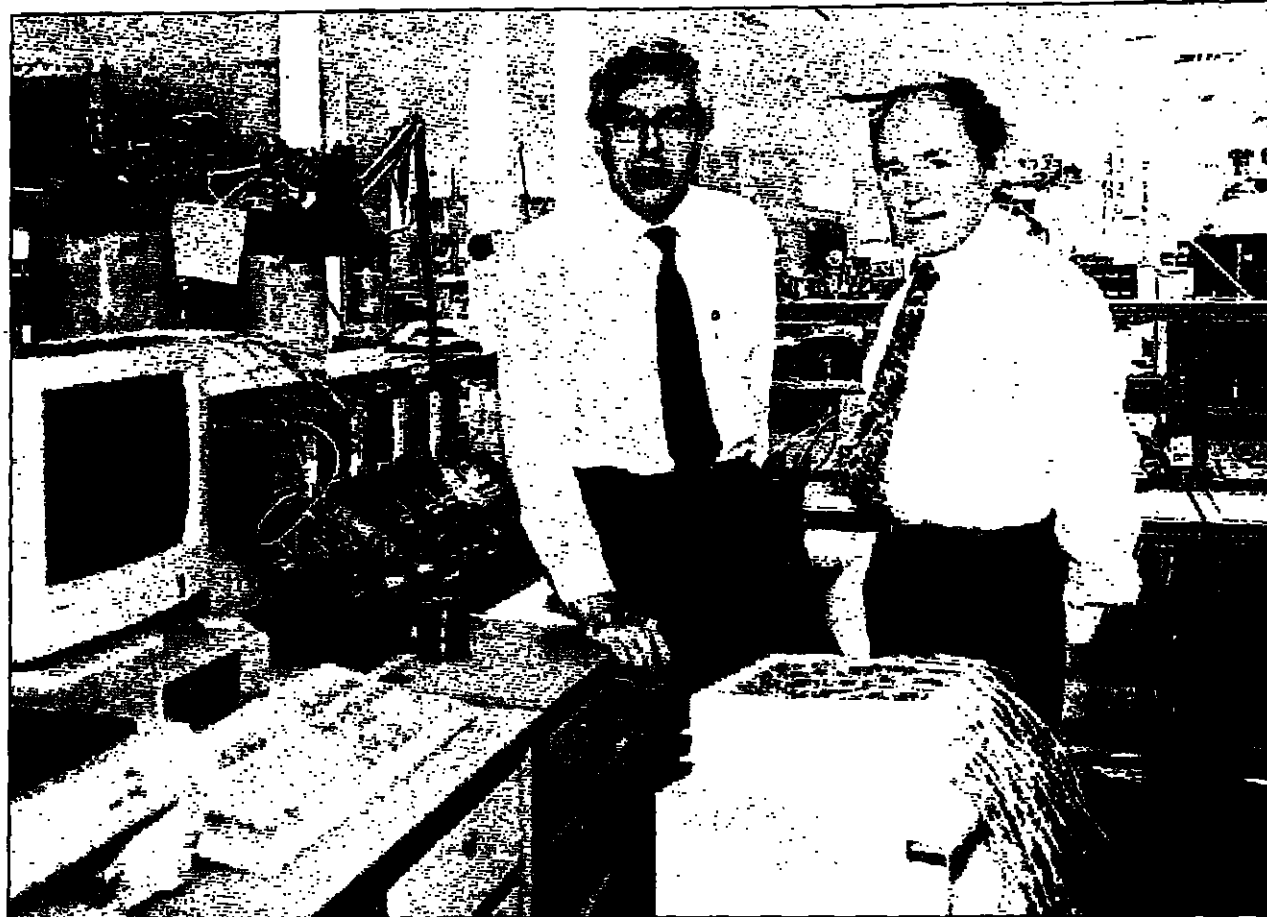
a variety of sites, one of which included Scotland. LG already operates a thriving television and microwave oven plant on South Tyneside.

But since the BBC report, sources close to the project say that LG has not been in touch with either the Welsh Development Agency or Scottish Enterprise, although a decision on the project had been expected by mid-April.

Mr Forsyth is in Korea at the moment on what has been widely seen as a mission to convince LG to choose Scotland as the site for the plant. But officials at Scottish Enterprise said the trip had been planned some time in advance and would not comment on which companies Mr Forsyth planned to visit.

Large inward-investment decisions such as LG's are often subject to last-minute delays as investors weigh up the attractions, including government assistance, offered by potential sites.

There has been speculation that the two are now holding off from decisions to invest in Britain in case the beef crisis leads to a deeper split between Britain and the European Union. But this did not prevent Daewoo, in late March, from expanding production at its video recorder factory in Antrim, Northern Ireland, creating a further 330 jobs.



John Finbow, managing director, left, and Brian Hobbs, technical director, the co-founders of City Technology

City Technology set for float

By Philip Pangalos

CITY Technology Holdings, a designer and maker of electrochemical and catalytic bead gas sensors, is expected to be capitalised at up to £80 million when it floats on the stock market next month.

City Technology is seeking a full listing through a placing by Cazenove & Co, sponsor, underwriter and broker to the issue. The offer size is expected to be about £45 million, with about £20 million of new money likely.

The company, which was formed by City University in

1977 to make an oxygen sensor developed at the university, has undergone significant expansion and was the subject of a £24.5 million management buyout in 1993. The buyout was backed by a group of venture capital investors led by 3i. At present, the company is concentrating on safety-monitoring sensors that detect unsafe gases and emissions monitoring.

John Finbow, managing director and co-founder, said the proceeds from the flotation would be used to reduce

£8.2 million of preference shares and pay down debt, substantially reducing gearing from its present level of about 85 per cent. He added that the group intended to continue expanding its products and geographical territories, with Asia, the Far East and South Africa seen as key target markets.

The company made an operating profit of £5.8 million in 1995, on turnover of £14.4 million, with exports accounting for 75 per cent of sales. About 25 per cent of

sales are derived in the United Kingdom, while about 45 per cent are in the US.

Directors will see a combined stake of 42 per cent diluted to about 31 per cent post-float. Mr Finbow, who has a 14 per cent shareholding, will become a paper millionaire. His stake will dilute to about 10.5 per cent.

There will be an employee priority offer of up to 10 per cent of the placing. Impact day and pricing is expected on June 13, with dealings scheduled to begin on June 20.

Leeson echoes heard in \$350m fraud trial of US bond trader

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

WALL STREET'S dirty linen is on public show again in the trial of Joseph Jett, the government bond trader sacked from Kidder Peabody two years ago on charges of having invented phoney trades that lost the firm millions of dollars.

After a week of hearings at Manhattan Federal district court, the Securities and Exchange Commission has failed to prove that Mr Jett, the head of Kidder's government bond-dealing desk, was a rogue trader acting alone and without the knowledge of his superiors. Unless SEC lawyers can strengthen their case this week, the industry watchdog could be heading for a historic defeat.

Meanwhile, Mr Jett has condemned the proceedings as a "kangaroo court" since he was denied the jury trial he had requested. His lawyer argues that Mr Jett is being treated as a scapegoat.

The Jett case bears many similarities to Nick Leeson and Barings since the SEC claims Mr Jett manipulated Kidder's computer accounting system to post false trades that created \$350 million in phoney profits to make up for \$100 million in real losses.

On the strength of those profits he became the firm's star trader and was paid a \$5 million bonus in 1993. But when the fake trades were discovered the next year, Kidder came close to collapse before General Electric, its owner, sold it and sacked much of the senior management.

While Leeson admitted his faults, Mr Jett insists he hid nothing from his superiors, who approved his trading strategy. As with Barings, there is the question of whether Kidder's senior managers knew what he was doing, or whether they were negligent for failing to spot the fake trades for nearly two years.

The evidence threatens to become bewilderingly complex since the trades consisted of "strips", where government bonds were broken down into their interest and principal elements which were then sold off separately, and "recons",

where such bonds were restituted to their original state. But Mr Jett has presented evidence that his trading records had been openly available to his superiors and the SEC has not yet shown how he might have concealed what he was doing.

If Mr Jett loses, the penalties will be severe. The SEC wants to ban him from the securities industry for life and confiscate \$8 million of his money from his Kidder bank accounts.

Kalamazoo jumps on \$33m buy

SHARES in Kalamazoo Computer Group jumped 28p to 143p after the company announced it is expanding its operations with the acquisition of the European-based Automotive Dealer Systems division (Eads) of Datapoint Corporation of the US for up to \$33 million (Philip Pangalos writes).

The acquisition will be part funded by a £7.5 million placing and open offer on a 22-for-100 basis at 103p a share, with the balance coming from the group's cash resources and bank facilities.

Eads is the largest supplier of dealer management systems to Ford in continental Europe and will provide the enlarged group with the potential to deliver pan-European systems solutions to large motor manufacturers.

Eads made an operating profit of £2.76 million in the year to July 31, 1995, on turnover of £23.3 million. Kalamazoo also forecasts a drop in full year pre-tax profits to, at least £3.9 million (£6.82 million) in the year to March 31, 1996. The directors also plan a 3.05p final dividend, making 4.15p (3.75p).

Tandem reassures after £2m loss

By Martin Barrow



Garland: huge potential

TANDEM, one of Britain's few surviving bicycle manufacturers, yesterday sought to reassure investors on its long-term prospects after disclosing losses of £2.19 million for the year to January 28.

The company, announcing its first results since the merger with Casket in November 1995 and the change of name from EFG, said borrowings had been substantially reduced since the year-end. Production facilities were now in better shape to make gains in Europe.

Robin Garland, chief executive, said: "Although the

first results since the merger are initially disappointing, the cycle business has huge potential." He said said measures taken to improve performance had been more extensive than was anticipated at the time of the merger. Production had been consolidated from four sites into two.

Last year Tandem, whose brands include Townsend, Falcon and British Eagle, sold more than 600,000 cycles, representing almost 30 per cent of the UK market. Its losses, included a goodwill write-off of £1.53 million and compared with profits of

£197,000 in the previous 12 months. Losses were 4.15p a share, against earnings of 1.91p. There is no dividend for the year (0.5p). The shares were unchanged at 14p.

The operating loss of £1.28 million included a £1.54 million loss incurred by the Casket companies in the quiet trading months of December and January.

By the year-end borrowings were reduced by £8.5 million to £19.7 million and debts have been further reduced through the sale of Richmond Horticulture and the restructuring of Casket's clothing business.

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The order of the court appointing them as Joint Administrators of the above named company is as follows: Loe & Co Limited, of 12 New Bridge Street, London, EC4A 3DF, is hereby appointed as Joint Administrator of the above named company.

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Bill eases French Telecom share sale

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN PARIS

THE French Government yesterday approved a Bill changing the state-owned France Telecom into a corporation, paving the way for the sale of up to 49 per cent of its stock but leaving control with the state.

François Fillon, Telecommunications Minister, said the sale of shares in the company would probably take place in the first half of 1997. The timing would depend on market conditions and the timing of the sales of Deutsche Telekom, which is scheduled for the end of this year, and Italy's Stet later in 1997. Analysts estimate France Telecom will be valued at about Fr200 billion.

The draft Bill calls for the state to retain 51 per cent in the group and earmarks 10 per cent of the capital for staff. From next January, France Telecom would be a limited company and no longer a branch of the civil service. However, the Government has guaranteed it will continue to pay the pensions of staff and has promised current staff they will not lose civil servant status.

France Telecom will have to pay the state a one-off sum to compensate for the Government's pension guarantee — estimated at between Fr40 billion and Fr50 billion. M Fillon said the state would assume a pension liability of some Fr250 billion while France Telecom would only pay about Fr100 billion in pension charges.

M Fillon said he expected that Deutsche Telekom and America's Sprint Corp would take stakes in France Telecom. Parliament has already passed a law opening up France's telecommunications sector to full competition from January 1998.

M Fillon said that over the next ten years France Telecom employees aged 55 and older could take early retirement on 70 per cent of their wages. He expects 35,000 staff to do so, while 20,000 to 25,000 would retire normally.



David Quarumby who has been appointed to beat the drum for British tourism, a role he performed for Sainsbury's and London Transport

Business fights to retain old Hong Kong airport

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

BUSINESSMEN in Hong Kong are calling for the retention of Kai Tak airport, due to be closed in early 1998 when the new international airport at Chek Lap Kok opens.

Sir Piers Jacobs, the colony's Financial Secretary until 1990, said yesterday: "We can have this inner-city airport virtually for nothing. Communications are terrible into most of south China, awful roads, but there are lots of small airports."

He added: "Hong Kong is about service, about commun-

ications — let's not throw this local airport away."

The feasibility of keeping the old airport surfaced just before the signing today of a British-Chinese agreement to construct a second runway at Chek Lap Kok. Airport officials said that with the new runway there would be no need to keep an inner-city airport.

But Sir Piers said "It would be near everything, a short drive from the main hotels. We need a first-class interna-

tional airport, but why spend hours getting in and out of one if you're just doing short business trips?"

R A Siegel, director of civil aviation, said: "If you're flying down from China on a commuter plane and land at the city airport and want to get to the international one, you'd have an awfully long connection. And what about transferring cargo from one airport to another? It could be really awkward."

Other objections from air-

port officials yesterday centred on environmental questions — especially aircraft noise, which is a huge social issue in the colony — and air traffic congestion.

Martin Craig, president of Saab Aircraft International, rejected both factors. "The kinds of commuter planes I have in mind, 50-seaters, wouldn't even be heard over the car traffic noise. They would land two thirds of the way down the strip at a steep angle, and would hardly fly over any houses. It wouldn't be like now with these huge long-distance jumbo jets. And as a commuter facility it would only use 30 per cent of the present airport anyway."

It is unlikely that Kai Tak will be preserved. A government commission is preparing plans for the sale of the profitable land for housing, although Sir Piers and Mr Craig both insist that present property values would soar if Kai Tak became a commuter airport.

Bottomley names new Tourist head

DAVID QUARMBY, a former joint managing director of J Sainsbury, was yesterday appointed chairman of the British Tourist Authority and the English Tourist Board (Harvey Elliott writes).

Mr Quarumby, 54, takes over on June 1 from Adele Biss, whose contract was terminated by Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, last month. He spent 14 years with London Transport where he was director of operational research, chief commercial and planning officer, and managing director of buses, and was responsible for the popular Travelcard. At Sainsbury's he directed store operations, logistics and personnel, and is chairman of Savacentre, the hypermarket chain.

Mrs Bottomley, who is in Japan leading a BTA trade mission, said yesterday: "David Quarumby is a proven business strategist with an impressive track record and leadership skills..."

Peter Moore, managing director of Center Parcs, was also appointed to the English Tourist Board.

Travel news, pages 34 and 35

South Koreans to open Scottish plant

A SOUTH Korean industrial group is to invest £8.6 million in Scotland, creating almost 300 jobs. Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State for Scotland, announced yesterday during a two-day visit to Seoul. Shin Ho Tech plans to build a factory in Glenrothes to assemble computer monitors. Last week, Kohdensha, a Japanese company, said that it would invest £6.5 million in Dunfermline, creating 87 new jobs.

Shin Ho Tech plans to begin construction of the factory in the third quarter of this year and start production in the second quarter of 1997. It will supply a range of United Kingdom and European customers. Mr Forsyth, who was in South Korea on the second leg of an inward investment initiative in the Far East, said: "This decision by Shin Ho Tech is important because it is ground-breaking and I am determined that their investment will be followed by other Korean companies." He added: "This is excellent news for Scotland and I look forward to Shin Ho Tech contributing to and sharing the success of the Scottish electronics industry." The electronics industry employs about 54,000 people in Scotland.

Paper profits fall

THE Bristol Evening Post yesterday reported a 12.6 per cent fall in pre-tax profits, to £5.6 million, in the year to March 31, on turnover of £61.2 million, up 2 per cent. The downturn was largely due to a £1.64 million charge taken on the closure of its Ludlow print works. Yeovil. Profits before exceptional items were up 7 per cent to £6.6 million, in spite of a 26 per cent rise in newspaper costs. A final dividend of 9p makes the total 14p, up 9.8 per cent. The company is changing its name to Bristol United Press to reflect the fact that it publishes and prints newspapers other than the Evening Post.

Snecma chief sacked

THE French Government yesterday dismissed Bernard Dufour as chairman of Snecma, the state aircraft engine firm. Alain Lamassoure, a government spokesman, said that "recent statements" by M Dufour had questioned Snecma's strategy, and that he had failed to change policy "in spite of repeated requests from the Government". Les Echos, the economic daily, reported that M Dufour had angered the Government by asking for a capital increase of between Fr6 billion and Fr10 billion, whereas the Government wanted him to sell some of the company's assets.

Abacus Polar warning

ABACUS POLAR, a distributor of electronic components in Britain and Scandinavia, told shareholders that sales and profits in the second half would be adversely affected by a worldwide increase in the supply of semiconductors and passive products for the personal computer market. The company, formed through the merger of Abacus and Polar in December, reported a rise in profits to £4.49 million before tax, from £3.1 million, in the half year to March 31. Earnings were 7.3p a share, rising from 5.9p. The interim dividend rises to 1.8p, from 1.6p. The shares fell 19p to 220p.

Hawtin dividend rise

HAWTIN, the leisure, fitness and textile products company, reported profits of £2 million before tax for the half-year to March 31, rising from £1.65 million in the first half of the previous year. Earnings were 1.82p a share, compared with 1.53p, and the interim dividend is increased to 0.5p from 0.4p. Turnover of £25.6 million compared with £17.1 million previously and there was a 38 per cent advance in operating profits from continuing operations to £2.4 million. Hawtin's shares rose 1p to 54½p yesterday.

Companies could be hectored

Tax self-assessment controversy is about to return with a vengeance, says Heather Self

One may be forgiven for thinking that the debate had drawn to a close after the blaze of publicity surrounding personal tax self-assessment died down. But self-assessment is set to return with a vengeance for another group of taxpayers — UK companies. And for them, it may be even tougher.

The initial reaction of many companies may be "So what, we have been complying with Pay and File for three years, haven't we?". Indeed, they have. The basic principle of corporates, calculating their own tax, rather than the Inland Revenue doing it for them, was established under the 1993 system.

However, corporate self-assessment, which is currently going through a long consultation period (the official start date being clouded by the uncertainty over the next general election), means much more than that.

Doubtless we will see the "Son of Hector the Inspector" or some such Revenue advertising follow-up, promising the business world a leaner, quicker, more efficient corporate tax system, just like the original bowler-hatted Hector

has done for personal tax self-assessment. But there are already worrying signs.

A key issue is that the Revenue, as with personal tax self-assessment, will have increased powers of investigation, some of them random. This means that inspectors will be able to make inquiries without giving specific reasons. And with no assessment work to do, the Revenue will have the manpower to spare.

Allied to this is the introduction of a penalty regime noticeably stricter than under Pay and File. While the Revenue is at pains to emphasise that this will be triggered only by "fraudulent or negligent delivery" of a tax return, the view at Somerset House of what is negligence may be very different to that of a hard-pressed company. This gulf in perception has already been seen in the thorny issue of disclosure. The Revenue has belatedly increased the amount of white space on the proposed self-assessment form under the pivotal Electronic Lodgement Service to allow accounts to accompany a taxpayer's return — but it would not cope with, say, a sale contract if it were needed to give the re-



Heather Self believes a more pragmatic approach is needed

quired "full information" about a transaction. Yet the greatest headache for finance directors of multinationals could be the increasingly critical area of transfer pricing. Just picture the scene as the deadline for filling in the corporate return ap-

proaches. You have contacted the tax directors in your affiliated companies in Spain, Brazil and Kazakhstan and have worked out all the related-party cash flows. But what about the spare capacity which the UK allowed the German subsidiary to use on a

"cost plus 5 per cent" basis this year, which was itself a quid pro quo for a similar agreement in reverse last year?

And what of those losses that were accepted as a strategic decision in attempting to penetrate the Vietnam market for a couple of years — now four? And as for those interest-free loans between UK group companies... suddenly, the thought of signing a declaration that every transaction has been made on a strictly "arm's-length" basis is rather daunting.

As for the documentation that will be needed, we can look to the Australian model, which was carefully studied by the Revenue before the move to a self-assessment regime started. How does it sound: selecting your five key countries and setting down in order of preference the transfer pricing methods used?

Major changes to tax law seem to be brought in under the guise of a move to self-assessment, with no good case being brought for them. It is easy to blame the Revenue (and some of the more technical changes are clearly being driven by Somerset House), but the feeling persists that politicians have made promises which bind the Revenue into an unnecessarily tight timetable. We need to slow down and work out a system which does not result in needless burdens on business.

Further bureaucracy could be on the cards with a formal rulings system. While a regime that is binding on the Revenue would clearly be needed, it would be a shame if the current informal system disappeared, which is one forum where useful communication can take place.

A pragmatic, commercial view must be taken by all sides — one can only hope that the unpromising beginnings are left behind and the move to corporate self-assessment does not cause the business community to begin the third millennium under a cloud.

Heather Self is an international tax partner in Ernst & Young.

Leaders must show faith in profession

LAST WEEK, an impressive alliance of professional people wrote a letter to the President of the Board of Trade. It was quite unprecedented. It is the question of why it was unprecedented that is so intriguing.

The letter was signed by the heads of the main accountancy bodies whose members carry out auditing, by bodies representing actuaries and architects, construction and investment bankers, pension fund managers and finance directors. As Graham Ward, of Price Waterhouse, who has been masterminding the exercise for the English ICA, pointed out, there were representatives from every area with a set of accounts.

The letter was, of course, the one calling on Ian Lang to set in motion a review of the law on liability. There are excellent reasons for his doing so. As the Scottish ICA president, Robert Smith, of Morgan Grenfell, commented at the time: "There is already clear evidence that anxieties flowing from the present situation are stifling the development of more useful audits and audit reports, which benefits no one."

Or, as Peter Smith, chairman of Coopers & Lybrand, put it: "The overwhelming issue is that it is not commercially defensible or realistic that we should financially underwrite the failure of management from whom we are wholly independent." We know all that. We know the current system is unjust. But we also know governments see few votes in the professions and delay is their only policy on this one.

What is interesting about this development is that it has happened at all. The question is why the professions and the associated trade associations have not done this before. After all, the reforms achieved in the US were achieved in precisely this way. There, a coalition of lawyers, accountants and information technology companies fought for, and won, significant concessions to deter what they called "frivolous" lawsuits and gain a principle of proportionate liability in assessing blame where cases were obviously somewhat more serious.

The difference seems to be that in the US, where they are much more traditional about things anyway, the professions still have the courage of their convictions. They still believe that what they are doing is right. In this country, that feeling is much less strong. In recent weeks, we have had several examples. The leaders of the profession have

put inbumbling performances while their critics have gained the upper hand. It is the rebels and the reformers who have the courage of their convictions. The leaders seem less sure.

Presidents of professional bodies and chairmen of the trade associations are the ones who dither. When faced with an annual meeting that was going the way of the dissidents the other week, the president of the certified accountants did not attempt reasoned argument. He didn't try to put his own views across. He simply refused to take any more questions and closed the meeting.

The same feeling comes across if you look at the latest report and accounts of the English ICA. It is full of flannel. The report begins: "One word sums up our theme for 1995 and beyond — excellence." On reading that, there can be only one reaction — to sling it in the bin.

But we are talking of a report by the biggest accountancy body in the country. Almost all of its 109,000 members deal with figures and reports most of their lives. They know what flannel is. Why does their institute not know?

The report has a fine photograph of the president, the secretary and the other two office-holders, taken in the warm glow of the old library at Moorgate Place. It looks just as it should — four solid, amiable and competent people, just right to warn a minister that a policy is off beam, to tell a client that an accounting policy is not on, or to advise you on a pension.

But turn the page, and you find yards of patronising waffle. Eight pages are divided between the council's report and an extraordinary sequence headed "Did You Know?", resembling the gee-whizz stuff served up to teenagers by magazines with not a clue about their market.

Some of the information is impressive, for example the number of technical and ethical enquiries dealt with by the institute. Some is nonsense. Some of the most useful services are listed under the headline "Best-kept secrets", which suggests the institute is somehow embarrassed about them.

When the profession's leaders seem so unsure of themselves, their message and what they stand for, it is no wonder that politicians can get away with shelving eminently reasonable reforms. What the leaders need is gravitas and to mean it.



ROBERT BRUCE

Top lament on self-assessment

THE great verse competition that we organised in conjunction with the Chartered Institute of Taxation has been a tremendous success.

An extraordinary number of entries arrived via fax, post and e-mail, which only goes to show just how annoyed people are by self-assessment, the topic for the verses. The brief was to come up with the best ditty to celebrate, illuminate or vilify the self-assessment system.

You could, like Kate Hibbert of London N7, one of the runners-up, be realistic about it all:

Where once we could relax
While experts did our tax,
Now we're self-assessing.
How depressing.

Even the taxmen themselves are joining in the chorus of disapproval. Another runner-up is Leon Rose, of Stockport, himself a retired inspector of

taxes. He takes the concept of tax penalties to their logical conclusion:

I used to get my tax assessed,
And that was always a bit of a pest.
But now we have self-assessment.
What follows? — self-arrestment?

The winner, who will shortly be the recipient of a magnum of champagne from the

Chartered Institute of Taxation, is Brenda Walsh, of Oxfordshire. These are her views:

Keep your records up to date,
For if you don't I'll seal your fate.
No use for you to plead or beg.
The penalties an arm and leg.

ROBERT BRUCE

Shares close below best of day

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1996	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES							
556	478	464	Heineken	470	+4	0.8	18.2
557	479	465	Heineken	475	+4	0.8	18.2
558	480	466	Heineken	478	+4	0.8	18.2
559	481	467	Heineken	480	+4	0.8	18.2
560	482	468	Heineken	482	+4	0.8	18.2
561	483	469	Heineken	484	+4	0.8	18.2
562	484	470	Heineken	486	+4	0.8	18.2
563	485	471	Heineken	488	+4	0.8	18.2
564	486	472	Heineken	490	+4	0.8	18.2
565	487	473	Heineken	492	+4	0.8	18.2
566	488	474	Heineken	494	+4	0.8	18.2
567	489	475	Heineken	496	+4	0.8	18.2
568	490	476	Heineken	498	+4	0.8	18.2
569	491	477	Heineken	500	+4	0.8	18.2
570	492	478	Heineken	502	+4	0.8	18.2
571	493	479	Heineken	504	+4	0.8	18.2
572	494	480	Heineken	506	+4	0.8	18.2
573	495	481	Heineken	508	+4	0.8	18.2
574	496	482	Heineken	510	+4	0.8	18.2
575	497	483	Heineken	512	+4	0.8	18.2
576	498	484	Heineken	514	+4	0.8	18.2
577	499	485	Heineken	516	+4	0.8	18.2
578	500	486	Heineken	518	+4	0.8	18.2
579	501	487	Heineken	520	+4	0.8	18.2
580	502	488	Heineken	522	+4	0.8	18.2
581	503	489	Heineken	524	+4	0.8	18.2
582	504	490	Heineken	526	+4	0.8	18.2
583	505	491	Heineken	528	+4	0.8	18.2
584	506	492	Heineken	530	+4	0.8	18.2
585	507	493	Heineken	532	+4	0.8	18.2
586	508	494	Heineken	534	+4	0.8	18.2
587	509	495	Heineken	536	+4	0.8	18.2
588	510	496	Heineken	538	+4	0.8	18.2
589	511	497	Heineken	540	+4	0.8	18.2
590	512	498	Heineken	542	+4	0.8	18.2
591	513	499	Heineken	544	+4	0.8	18.2
592	514	500	Heineken	546	+4	0.8	18.2
593	515	501	Heineken	548	+4	0.8	18.2
594	516	502	Heineken	550	+4	0.8	18.2
595	517	503	Heineken	552	+4	0.8	18.2
596	518	504	Heineken	554	+4	0.8	18.2
597	519	505	Heineken	556	+4	0.8	18.2
598	520	506	Heineken	558	+4	0.8	18.2
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604	526	512	Heineken	570	+4	0.8	18.2
605	527	513	Heineken	572	+4	0.8	18.2
606	528	514	Heineken	574	+4	0.8	18.2
607	529	515	Heineken	576	+4	0.8	18.2
608	530	516	Heineken	578	+4	0.8	18.2
609	531	517	Heineken	580	+4	0.8	18.2
610	532	518	Heineken	582	+4	0.8	18.2
611	533	519	Heineken	584	+4	0.8	18.2
612	534	520	Heineken	586	+4	0.8	18.2
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615	537	523	Heineken	592	+4	0.8	18.2
616	538	524	Heineken	594	+4	0.8	18.2
617	539	525	Heineken	596	+4	0.8	18.2
618	540	526	Heineken	598	+4	0.8	18.2
619	541	527	Heineken	600	+4	0.8	18.2
620	542	528	Heineken	602	+4	0.8	18.2
621	543	529	Heineken	604	+4	0.8	18.2
622	544	530	Heineken	606	+4	0.8	18.2
623	545	531	Heineken	608	+4	0.8	18.2
624	546	532	Heineken	610	+4	0.8	18.2
625	547	533	Heineken	612	+4	0.8	18.2
626	548	534	Heineken	614	+4	0.8	18.2
627	549	535	Heineken	616	+4	0.8	18.2
628	550	536	Heineken	618	+4	0.8	18.2
629	551	537	Heineken	620	+4	0.8	18.2
630	552	538	Heineken	622	+4	0.8	18.2
631	553	539	Heineken	624	+4	0.8	18.2
632	554	540	Heineken	626	+4	0.8	18.2
633	555	541	Heineken	628	+4	0.8	18.2
634	556	542	Heineken	630	+4	0.8	18.2
635	557	543	Heineken	632	+4	0.8	18.2
636	558	544	Heineken	634	+4	0.8	18.2
637	559	545	Heineken	636	+4	0.8	18.2
638	560	546	Heineken	638	+4	0.8	18.2
639	561	547	Heineken	640	+4	0.8	18.2
640	562	548	Heineken	642	+4	0.8	18.2
641	563	549	Heineken	644	+4	0.8	18.2
642	564	550	Heineken	646	+4	0.8	18.2
643	565	551	Heineken	648	+4	0.8	18.2
644	566	552	Heineken	650	+4	0.8	18.2
645	567	553	Heineken	652	+4	0.8	18.2
646	568	554	Heineken	654	+4	0.8	18.2
647	569	555	Heineken	656	+4	0.8	18.2
648	570	556	Heineken	658	+4	0.8	18.2
649	571	557	Heineken	660	+4	0.8	18.2
650	572	558	Heineken	662	+4	0.8	18.2
651	573	559	Heineken	664	+4	0.8	18.2
652	574	560	Heineken	666	+4	0.8	18.2
653	575	561	Heineken	668	+4	0.8	18.2
654	576	562	Heineken	670	+4	0.8	18.2
655	577	563	Heineken	672	+4	0.8	18.2
656	578	564	Heineken	674	+4	0.8	18.2
657	579	565	Heineken	676	+4	0.8	18.2
658	580	566	Heineken	678	+4	0.8	18.2
659	581	567	Heineken	680	+4	0.8	18.2
660	582	568	Heineken	682	+4	0.8	18.2
661	583	569	Heineken	684	+4	0.8	18.2
662	584	570	Heineken	686	+4	0.8	18.2
663	585	571	Heineken	688	+4	0.8	18.2
664	586	572	Heineken	690	+4	0.8	18.2
665	587	573	Heineken	692	+4	0.8	18.2
666	588	574	Heineken	694	+4	0.8	18.2
667	589	575	Heineken	696	+4	0.8	18.2
668	590	576	Heineken	698	+4	0.8	18.2
669	591	577	Heineken	700	+4	0.8	18.2
670	592	578	Heineken	702	+4	0.8	18.2
671	593	579	Heineken	704	+4	0.8	18.2
672	594	580	Heineken	706	+4	0.8	18.2
673	595	581	Heineken	708	+4	0.8	18.2
674	596	582	Heineken	710	+4	0.8	18.2
675	597	583	Heineken	712	+4	0.8	18.2
676	598	584	Heineken	714	+4	0.8	18.2
677	599	585	Heineken	716	+4	0.8	18.2
678	600	586	Heineken	718	+4	0.8	18.2
679	601	587	Heineken	720	+4	0.8	18.2
680	602	588	Heineken	722	+4	0.8	18.2
681	603	589	Heineken	724	+4	0.8	18.2
682	604	590	Heineken	726	+4	0.8	18.2
683	605	591	Heineken	728	+4	0.8	18.2
684	606	592	Heineken	730	+4	0.8	18.2
685	607	593	Heineken	732	+4	0.8	18.2
686	608	594	Heineken	734	+4	0.8	18.2
687	609	595	Heineken	736	+4	0.8	18.2
688	610	596	Heineken	738	+4	0.8	18.2
689	611	597	Heineken	740	+4	0.8	18.2
690	612	598	Heineken	742	+4	0.8	18.2
691	613	599	Heineken	744	+4	0.8	18.2
692	614	600	Heineken	746	+4	0.8	18.2
693	615	601	Heineken	748	+4	0.8	18.2
694	616	602	Heineken	750	+4	0.8	18.2
695	617	603	Heineken	752	+4	0.8	18.2
696	618	604	Heineken	754	+4	0.8	18.2
697	619	605	Heineken	756	+4	0.8	18.2
698	620	606	Heineken	758	+4	0.8	18.2
699	621	607	Heineken	760	+4	0.8	18.2
700	622	608	Heineken	762	+4	0.8	18.2
701	623	609	Heineken	764	+4	0.8	18.2
702	624	610	Heineken	766	+4	0.8	18.2
703	625	611	Heineken	768	+4	0.8	18.2
704	626	612	Heineken	770	+4	0.8	18.2
705	627	613	Heineken	772	+4	0.8	18.2
706	628	614	Heineken	774	+4	0.8	18.2
707	629	615	Heineken	776	+4	0.8	18.2
708	630	616	Heineken	778	+4	0.8	18.2
709	631	617	Heineken	780	+4	0.8	18.2
710	632	618	Heineken	782	+4	0.8	18.2
711	633	619	Heineken	784	+4	0.8	18.2
712	634	620	Heineken	786	+4	0.8	18.2
713	635	621	Heineken	788	+4	0.8	18.2
714	636	622	Heineken	790	+4	0.8	18.2
715	637	623	Heineken	792	+4	0.8	18.2
716	638	624	Heineken	794	+4	0.8	18.2
717	639	625	Heineken	796	+4	0.8	18.2
718	640	626	Heineken	798	+4	0.8	18.2
719	641	627	Heineken	800	+4	0.8	18.2
720	642	628	Heineken	802	+4	0.8	18.2
721	643	629	Heineken	804	+4	0.8	18.2
722	644	630	Heineken	806	+4	0.8	18.2
723	645	631	Heineken	808	+4	0.8	18.2
724							

Home is where the holiday is

An all-party committee of MPs is to hold an inquiry into tourism in Britain in an attempt to find out what can be done to "encourage tourists, especially from abroad".

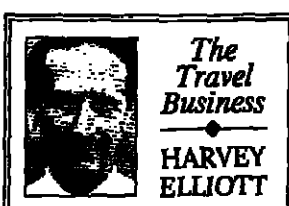
We need as many of these foreign visitors as we can get to help to kick-start the economy. But as David Quarmby, the former joint managing director of Sainsbury who was appointed yesterday to be the new chairman of the British Tourist Authority, is already all too aware, we also need to encourage British holidaymakers to spend more of their free time on home soil.

And despite the gloomy weather so far, this summer could just see the rebirth of domestic British tourism. It is predicted that at least one million fewer package holidaymakers will go abroad this year. Yet most of that missing million are surely going to want to take a holiday somewhere.

Evidence that they are beginning to look closer to home is so far largely anecdotal. But hotel occupancy rates are now on the way up, and even prices have not slowed the bookings. But hotels are not the only — or even the best — places to stay while on holiday.

There is a growing demand for "chocolate-box" holiday cottages, which tour operators from Thomson to Hosesons, as well as specialist operators such as Rural Retreats and the National Trust, are all now coming increasingly to regard as money-spinners, both for themselves and for their individual owners.

The cottage owners can expect to make more than £8,000 a year on a property sleeping six people, which is then rented out through a company, and still have a holiday home for themselves for four weeks of the year. Families or groups of friends



The Travel Business
HARVEY ELLIOTT

can rent them at a fraction of the cost of travelling abroad.

Canal boat cruising is now twice as popular as a day at an amusement park, and the 2,000-mile network of inland waterways with their rural towpaths, working heritage, slow pace of life and canal-side pubs are also increasingly appealing, even to tourists normally prepared to fly to the ends of the earth in search of that "something different".

Farmers reeling from the BSE crisis are ever more willing to look for new sources of income — and with financial assistance from the European Commission for turning farms into holiday centres, staying on a farm has changed beyond recognition.

Hundreds of farmers have now converted barns and stables to accommodate visitors, turned large areas of land into four-wheel-drive vehicle courses, fishing lakes and farm parks, and now offer a standard unheard of only a few years ago.

Fuelled by largely hysterical scares about health hazards such as the meningitis outbreak in Majorca, cancer from the sun, and heart disease from the cabins of aeroplanes, the urge to holiday at home is growing all the time.

As we report elsewhere, much needs to be done to ensure that protectionist local authorities realise how significant tourism is to their economy. Given the right impetus foreign package holidays can begin to take second place to home-based holidays. All we now need is the weather.

Bargains of the week — the latest offers on holidays, ferries, flights and hotels

HOLIDAYS

TURKEY for two weeks for £165 per person including bed and breakfast with a flight from Manchester next Wednesday is available from Portland Holidays. Details: 0990 002200.

MARGARITA Island, Venezuela, an unusual sunshine destination, is on offer throughout June for £649 per person including flights, meals, drinks and 4-star accommodation from Goldenjoy Holidays. Details: 0171-794 9767

LUXOR for a week for £139 per person including bed and breakfast in a 3-star hotel with flights from Gatwick on June 7 and 14 is available from Crusader Travel. Details: 0181-744 0474

BEACH hotel holidays in Mombasa with direct flights from Manchester are on offer for £429 per person including seven nights' half-board accommodation from Somak Holidays until mid-June. Details: 0181-423 3000

ARGO Holidays is offering cut-price self-catering holidays to Greek islands with flights from Gatwick to Kos on June 8, Corfu on June 10 and Rhodes on June 12. Prices range from £199 per person for a week to £299 for a fortnight. Details: 0171-331 7070

AUSTRIAN lakes and mountains feature in week-long packages to a number of resorts on offer from Crystal Holidays. Prices start from £199 per person with flights from eight regional airports on June 15. Details: 0181-399 5144

SAVINGS of £100 per person for a week's holiday in a suite at Cobblers Cove, Barbados, are available until July 15 from Harlequin Worldwide Travel. The new price including return BA flights is £878 per person. Details: 01708 552780

CANOEING on the Dordogne is being offered by Headwater Holidays throughout the summer. The £467 price per person includes return ferry crossings, eight nights' half-board accommodation at hotels along the river, canoes and a lesson. Details: 01606 48699

SPA HOTELS in Budapest feature in offers from July from Thermalia Travel with prices starting at £399 per person including flights from Heathrow, some meals and use of thermal pools. Details: 0171-483 1998

PAN TOURS is now offering a seven-night trip to the old and new capitals of Russia — St Petersburg and Moscow, for £585 per person including half-board accommodation with a BA flight from Heathrow on August 24. Details: 0171-821 7000



Land of the Pharaohs: visit Luxor, from Gatwick, for only £139 a week B&B

FERRIES

STENA Line is quoting £60 returns for a car and up to four passengers on its Harwich-Hook of Holland route. The fare applies to a five-day return ticket, travelling Sunday-Thursday by June 30. Details: 0990 707070

NORTH Sea Ferries is offering 5 per cent off brochure prices, and Brittany Ferries 10 per cent off brochure fares on all routes for people booking through Eurodrive. Booking conditions may apply. Details: 0181 324 4000

HOVERBOARD is offering £59 crossings for a three-day ticket for a car and up to five people on Dover-Calais, book and travel by June 30. A £49 fare is also on offer on Folkestone-Boulogne. Details: 01304 240241

BRITANNIA Ferries and the French Tourist Office have joined forces to promote Normandy as a short-break destination. Brittany Ferries is quoting £126 for a five-day ticket on crossings from Portsmouth and Poole to Caen and Cherbourg, with accommodation from £15.50 per person per night. Details: 0990 360360

STENA Line has again extended a duty-free promotion on ferries to France from Dover, Newhaven and Southampton with prices of selected brands cut by up to two thirds. Day-trip prices in June are £15 per car and £1 per person. Details: 0990 767676

FLIGHTS

GULF Air has cut excursion fares to the Far East. Travel Warehouse is charging a flat return fare of £356 to either Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, Bangkok or Manila. Details: 0171-414 8808

WORLD Airlines has an introductory £199 business class fare for its London City to Amsterdam service. Details: 0171-287 6000

KLM has special Euroflights excursions flying from many UK airports via Amsterdam. Examples include Berlin for £136, Frankfurt £121, Madrid £120, Milan £124, Stockholm £195, Turin £119, Venice £120 and Vienna £148. Details: 0181-750 9000

CEDOK is offering low fares to Prague flying with the Czech airline CSA from London or Manchester. Return fares start at £139 in June, rising to £152 in July. Details: 0171-839 1141

DNATA has negotiated low fares to Johannesburg flying Alitalia via Rome. Economy costs £430 with business class priced at £1,726. Details: 0171-244 8844

DEUTSCHE BA (the British Airways German subsidiary) has launched a twice-daily service between Gatwick and Hamburg. Details: 0345 222111

HOTELS

LONDON'S newest town house hotel, the Park Consul, opened this week with a single room rate of £105 a night, double at £135. The 46-room hotel is located in a district known as Brompton Cross between Knightsbridge and South Kensington. Details: 0171-225 7500

HYATT Hotels has a special rate of \$105 a night for weekends at its 17 Californian hotels until June 16. The package includes breakfast, free local telephone calls and late checkout. Details: 0345 581666

CHILDREN are welcomed at the Plymouth Ho Moat House with weekend guests offered a free baby package of everything from cot and cotton wool to bath toy and baby shampoo. Weekend prices cost from £37 per person per night with children under 16 staying free. Details: 01752 639988

THE Ritz Hotel, London, which is celebrating its nineteenth birthday this week, has invited top French chef Joel Robuchon into its kitchens until June 8 with special seasonal dishes from Provence. Set lunches start at £28 per person with a gourmet dinner available at £85 per head. Details: 0171-493 8181

COARSE fishing, archery and clay pigeon shooting are some of the activities available at the White Hart Hotel at Bocking End, Essex. Prices per person for a two-night, half-board stay range from £79 for the fishing to £99 for the clay pigeon shooting. Details: 01376 321401

THE Hotel Clarence reopens in Dublin next week after an 18-month £5 million restoration. Backers of the 50-room hotel include members of the rock group U2. Rates start at £193 per room per night. Details: 0800 181535

LATE accommodation is available this week at Bath's Queensberry Hotel for visitors to the city's music festival, which features artists ranging from Cleo Laine and John Dankworth to the Lindsay Quartet. Rooms start at £129 per night. Details: 01225 447928

LOW season summer rates are available at Morocco's top hotel, La Mamounia in Marrakesh. Prices start at 3,420 dirams (about £258) for a three-night stay in an Art Deco bedroom, including breakfast, airport transfers and flowers in the room. Details: 0800 181123

AVERAGE daily room rates in UK hotels rose by 5.8 per cent last year, according to the latest survey of UK hotels from BDO Hospitality Consulting. Hotel occupancies here also rose, by 7.1 per cent over the year. Details: 0171-486 5191

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Prices from

From	To	Price
Amsterdam	London	£79
Birmingham	London	£79
Birmingham	Manchester	£79
Birmingham	Edinburgh	£119
Birmingham	Glasgow	£119
Birmingham	Belfast	£119
Birmingham	Cardiff	£119
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Tourists desert the Riviera

By TONY DAWE AND STEVE KEENAN

THE French Riviera, for so long the holiday playground of the rich and famous, is losing its allure. The number of visitors has dropped by 10 per cent and Parisians are deserting its beaches and boulevards in favour of the Atlantic coast and rural areas.

Now Britain's leading holiday company is thinking of pulling out, only nine months after launching a package tour programme to the region amid publicity about the English reclaiming the Promenade des Anglais in Nice.

Thomson intended to revive the French Riviera as a mainstream destination for British holidaymakers this summer, believing the development of self-catering and hotel sports complexes would appeal to our jaded family palates.

The company contracted nine apartment and hotel resorts in Cannes, Port Grimaud, Cap Esterel, Fréjus and Cap d'Ail, with prices starting from £149 per person and weekly charter flights from Gatwick, Birmingham and Manchester.

The response has been so disappointing, however, and the reaction of some who have travelled so unfavourable that

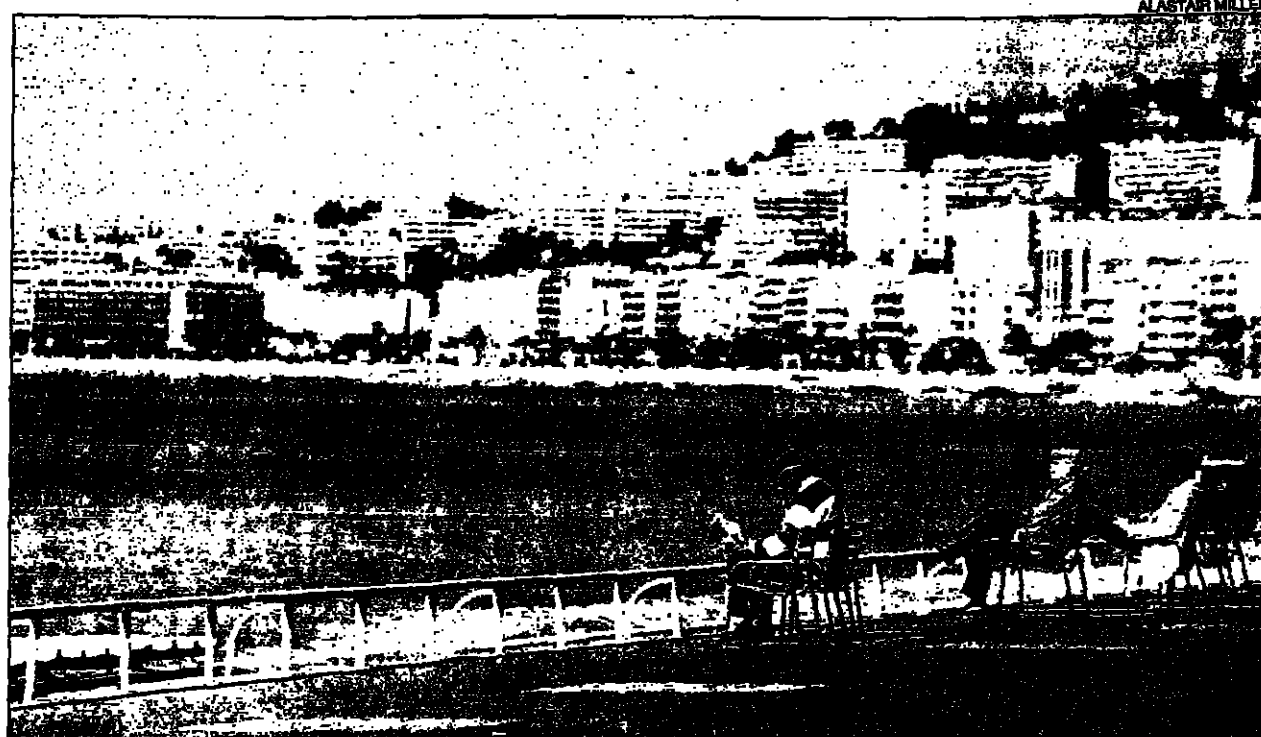
Thomson is considering dropping the Riviera from next year's summer brochure.

Its programme included the Cap Esterel complex, five miles from St Raphael and the largest of its type with 1,400 apartments. The complex boasts a nine-hole golf course, tennis, five pools, archery, mountain-biking, trekking and volleyball, with the beach a mile away, and was featured on television travel programmes earlier this year.

Stena Line, the ferry company which moved into air-based holidays this year, had taken seats on the Britannia charters operated by Thomson, but one executive said: "It is hard to put across the message about what type of holiday this is."

The decline in the Riviera's popularity is emphasised by a proliferation in bargain flights from Britain to Nice, once a premium route on which few discounts were available. Easyjet has introduced a £49.99 one-way fare from Luton to Nice and AirUK is offering a June deal of £97 for a restricted return ticket to Nice from Stansted.

The drop in visitors has disturbed tourism officials



An almost empty Promenade des Anglais in Nice. Even the British are now deserting the once-loved French Riviera

who have seen numbers fall from 8.5 million in 1985 to 7.8 million last year, despite predictions that the ten million mark would be passed before the end of the century. At the same time, the number of

French holidaymakers to the less crowded and cheaper Atlantic coast resorts has risen by 10 per cent in ten years.

Studies commissioned by the local hotels syndicate have identified visitors' dissatisfaction

with high pollution, endless traffic jams and overbuilding. Some complained of high prices and surliness in shops and restaurants. Local officials insist their efforts to clean beaches and tackle envi-

ronmental problems have not received the credit they deserve. They are now backing a regeneration plan to include a public parks programme and a publicity campaign for the region's 30 museums.

Airlines told to cut fares

By STEVE KEENAN

AIRLINES, including British Airways, could face legal action to force them to reduce some European air fares.

Neil Kinnock, the European Union Transport Commissioner, is to publish a report in July which is expected to threaten action against carriers which dominate a particular route and tacitly agree to keep fares high.

A number of low-cost airlines are planning to start up in competition with the major carriers on heavily used routes, when a total open skies policy comes into force in April 1997. Fares are then expected to fall. But Philip Lowe, a senior aide to Mr Kinnock, said that where two airlines share a route, there has so far been "total inertia" in bringing down fares.

The report is expected to recommend that an investigation should be launched by the EU's competition secretariat later this year. "It is something that is going to be addressed and we may call for specific action from our competition colleagues on abuses in certain places on certain fares," said Mr Lowe.

According to an American Express survey, the most expensive route in Europe is Geneva-Brussels, with business-class tickets costing £622 return.

The two airlines that serve the route are Sabena and Swissair, which recently marked the first anniversary of a marketing partnership.

On a cost-per-mile basis, the London-Istanbul route, which is operated only by British Airways and Turkish Airlines, is among the most expensive, at £608 return for a fully flexible economy ticket.

British Midland will also unveil a report next month which highlights fares on "duopoly" routes such as Heathrow-Rome — shared by BA and Alitalia — where the lowest return fares are £406 business class and £160 economy.

On the London-Geneva route, the lowest quoted fare from Swissair or BA at present is £386 business class and £99 economy. But on London-Zurich, a slightly longer journey where BM now competes, fares have fallen to £286 and £89 respectively.

Councils put stop to signs

TOURISTS are being prevented from finding their hotels or campsites because local councillors are refusing to allow new directional signs, *Harvey Elliott writes.*

Legislation introduced at the beginning of the year means that hotels, restaurants and other forms of accommodation can erect specially designed brown-on-white signs for foreign and British visitors.

But a survey of members of the British Hospitality Association shows that although hundreds of members have applied for permission to erect the signs, hardly any have been given the go-ahead.

"The situation is so serious that we are taking it up at the highest level," says Jeremy Logie, chief executive of the BHA. "In some cases, the refusals are due to the delay by the local Highways Authority in formulating its policy under the new regulations. In others, it appears, there is intransigent opposition at local level to

any relaxation of the regulations."

The survey shows that of the applications made so far, almost half are still being processed, a third have been rejected out of hand and the remainder appear to have ground to a halt.

Tourists on the Continent are guided to local hotels and restaurants by a series of clear directional signs. But in Britain only major tourist attractions with more than 150,000 visitors a year were allowed to use them. Temporary signs put up by the AA or newly opened hotels have to be taken down after at most six weeks.

The Government agreed that the new signs could be used from April this year.

"It was a way of saying that the needs of visitors should be central to local authorities' formulation of policy," says Mr Logie. "But they are as intransigent as ever."

"One member complained that he was told there were 'too many hotels to signpost'."

TRAVEL NOTES

God save our gracious bobbies

FOREIGN visitors now regard London's beat policemen, rather than the Queen and the rest of the Royal Family, as the true symbols of the capital, according to a new survey.

Some 36 per cent of the 1,000 foreign tourists questioned in London for the credit card company Visa said that the helmeted "bobby" symbolised London, while only 29 per cent automatically mentioned the Queen, 15 per cent said the Princess of Wales and 12 per cent "the typical pin-stripe suited English gent".

The Royal Family rates only slightly ahead of working as an au pair and just behind learning English as the main reason for coming to London — and even Covent Garden is ahead of Buckingham Palace as the favourite spot to visit.

The Royal Family was named by only 1.4 per cent of those questioned as the reason for their trip.

Name game

NOVEL and eye-catching company names have started to proliferate throughout the travel industry — all legally registered to prevent anyone from copying them.

Flying Colours is a new charter airline that will operate a fleet of four Boeing 757 twin jets to carry Club 18-30 and Sunset Holiday passengers to resorts in the Mediterranean and America.

The entrepreneur Franco Mancassola has formally registered his new airline — Debonair. He plans to fly British Aerospace 146 four-engined jets, the first of which is already registered in the airline's name, on scheduled services from Luton to the main cities in Europe.

Finally, Sandals Resorts has formally registered the name Weddingmoon as a trademark with which to market itself to the growing number of couples who combine a wedding ceremony with a honeymoon at its resorts.

Czech-in

PRAGUE, Venice, Budapest and Rome have all moved up the "Top Cities" league table of favourite short-break destinations, says Crystal Cities.

Paris, Amsterdam and Dublin remain firmly in the top three places in the table but the latest news is that Prague has jumped to fourth spot, ousting New York which has dropped to eighth.

True blue

EURO-SCEPTICS who hate having to show the new burgundy-coloured Euro/British passport can now buy a separate cover which looks, at first glance, almost like the blue-and-gold cover of the old document. All perfectly legal, apparently, and costing £5.50 or £6.50 from Opal Options (0118-958 8111).

Big problem

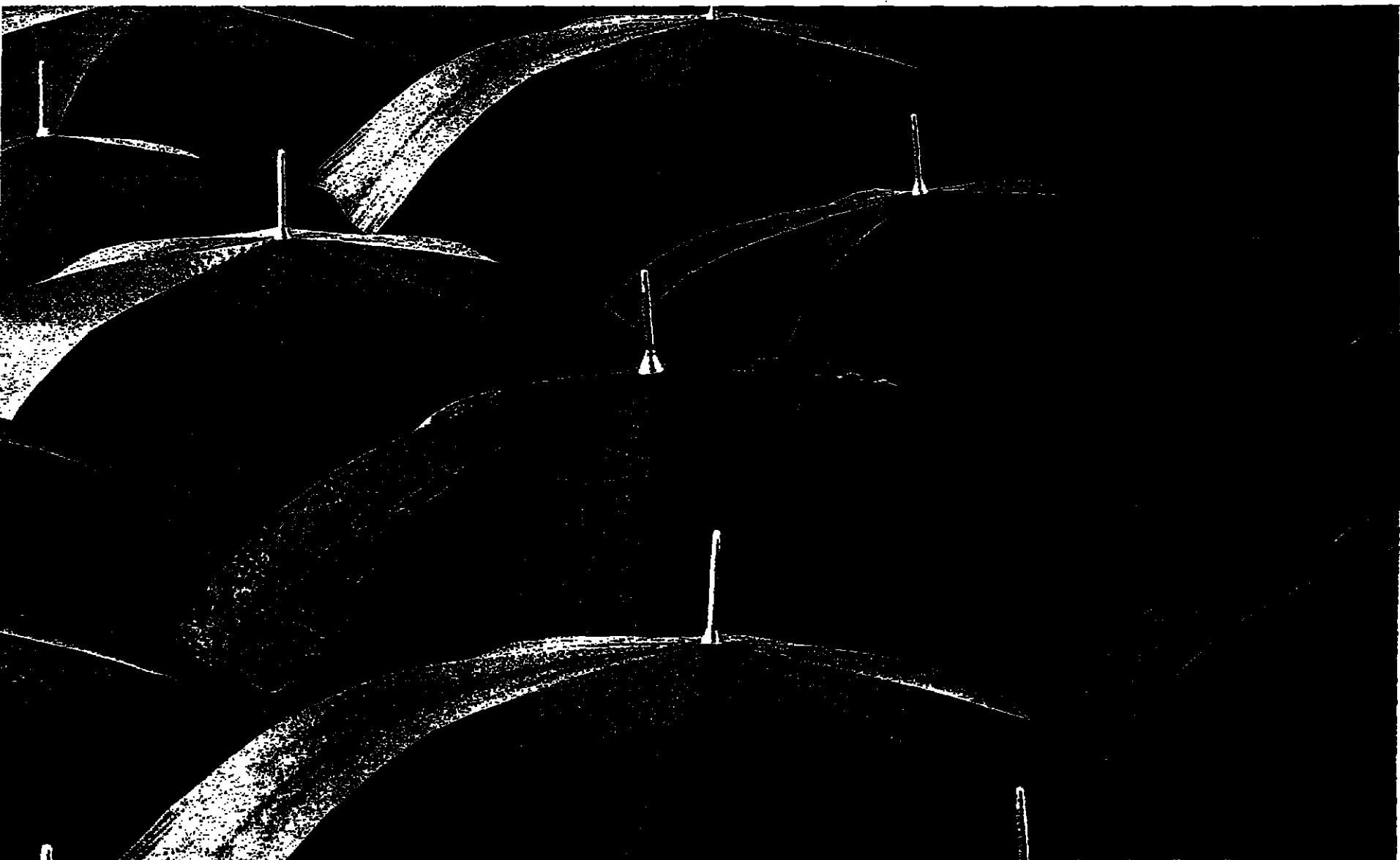
THE benefits from the use of much larger passenger aircraft may not be as great as were first thought, according to the Airports Council International. The jets, capable of carrying more than 600 people, will have to be separated further from each other on take-off and landing, taxiways will have to be widened and departure lounges extended at an average cost of about £70 million per international airport.

Vacuum healer

A VACUUM mini-pump which was developed to enable the French armed special forces and the aid agency Médecins sans Frontières to remove insect stings or snake venom is now being offered to British holidaymakers.

Aspivenin, the manufacturers, says it will be of particular help to people who are especially allergic to stings. Aspivenin costs £12.49 from larger Boots stores.

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Bank entitled only to simple interest

Westdeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale v Islington London Borough Council
Before Lord Goff of Chieveley, Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Woolf and Lord Lloyd of Berwick
[Speeches May 22]

Where an interest rate swap agreement between the defendant council and the plaintiff bank had been held void as being beyond the council's powers, and the bank had recovered the balance of the sum due, it was entitled only to simple interest on that sum from the date of accrual of its cause of action and not compound interest.

The House of Lords (Lord Goff and Lord Woolf dissenting), departing from *Stirling v Brougham* (1914) AC 398, allowed an appeal by Islington London Borough Council from the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Dillon, Lord Justice Leggatt and Lord Justice Kennedy) (The Times December 30, 1993) [1994] 1 WLR 938, which had dismissed an appeal by the council from Mr Justice Hobhouse (The Times February 23, 1993) [1993] 1 LGR 323, who had awarded Westdeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale compound interest.

The Court of Appeal also allowed a cross-appeal by the bank from the judge's decision that the interest should run from April 1, 1980 and had held that it should run from the date of accrual of the cause of action.

Mr Trevor Phillips, QC and Mr Brian Doores for the council; Mr Jonathan Sumption, QC and Mr George Leggatt for the bank.

LORD BROWNE-WILKINSON said that in the last decade many local authorities had entered into interest rate swap agreements with banks and other finance houses.

Such an agreement was one by which each party agreed to pay the other on a specified date or dates an amount calculated by reference to the interest that would have accrued over a given period on a notional principal sum.

The rate of interest payable by each party was different: one was usually fixed and the other was a variable or floating rate based on a fluctuating rate such as the six-month London inter-bank offered rate ("LIBOR"). Normally, the parties did not make the actual payments they had contracted for; the party owing the higher amount paid the difference to the other.

The arrangement between the council and the bank, concluded on June 16, 1987, was to run for 10

years from June 18. The interest sums were to be calculated on a notional principal sum of £25 million and to be payable half-yearly. The bank was to be the fixed rate payer at 7.5 per cent per annum and the council was to be the floating rate payer at the domestic sterling LIBOR rate.

In addition, the bank was to pay the council on June 18, 1987 a sum of £25 million which payment had been made. As a result of the provision of that upfront payment the interest rate payable by the bank was lower than the 7.5 per cent that would otherwise have been appropriate.

Payments had been made by the council under the agreement as a result of which that made by the bank to the council (£25 million) ceased to be made by the council to the bank by £1,453,525.93.

It was of central importance to note the way in which the council had dealt with the upfront payment. It had been credited to a bank account of the council in which there were other moneys of the council, that was, in a mixed account.

That account had become overdrawn overnight on several dates in June and July 1987. There was an overall debit balance on it on November 16. The moneys in the mixed account had been used by the council for its general expenditure.

If the upfront payment had not been received, the council would have had to borrow more money if it could. It had been and was likely to be in the future, rate-capped, and one of the attractions to it in the swap agreement had been that it obtained the upfront payment in a form that did not attract statutory controls.

On November 1, 1989, the Queen's Bench Divisional Court in *Hazell v Hammersmith and Fulham London Borough Council* (1990) 2 QB 671 had given judgment declaring void swap transactions entered into by local authorities. The House of Lords (1992) 2 AC 1 had held that such contracts were ultra vires local authorities and therefore void.

The Court of Appeal had held that the bank was entitled to recover the balance of £1,453,525.93 as loan money had been received. It had also held that it was entitled to recover it in equity on the ground that the council held the upfront payment on a resulting trust and was therefore personally liable as a trustee.

It had further held the council liable to pay compound interest on the balance from time to time

outstanding as from the date of receipt of the upfront payment.

The ability of the court to award compound, as opposed to simple, interest had been founded on the equitable jurisdiction to award a trustee or other person owing fiduciary duties who was personally accountable and had made use of the plaintiff's moneys. The council now accepted that it was personally liable to repay the balance to the bank.

It was common ground that in the absence of agreement or custom the court had no jurisdiction to award compound interest either at law or under section 35A of the Supreme Court Act 1981, as inserted by the Administration of Justice Act 1982. In the absence of an implied contract, His Lordship would overrule *Stirling v Brougham* on that point.

The decision as to rights in rem in it should also be overruled, although their Lordships should not be taken to be casting any doubt on the principles of tracing as established in *Re Diplock* (1948) Ch 465.

Lord Goff and Lord Woolf considered that compound interest should be awarded on the ground that equity could act in aid of the common law. His Lordship fully appreciated the strength of the bank's moral claim to receive full restitution, including compound interest, but it would not be right to develop the law as proposed.

Parliament had twice since 1934 considered what interest should be awarded on common law claims. Both section 3(1) of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1934 and its successor, section 35A of the 1981 Act, made it clear that the award of compound interest was not authorised.

The House of Lords would be usurping the function of Parliament if, by expanding the equitable rules, it were to hold that the court exercising its equitable jurisdiction in aid of the common law could award compound interest.

LORD GOFF, dissenting, said that the bank's claim arose from *Stirling v Brougham*, that a personal remedy in restitution was excluded on the ground of public policy, did not arise in the present case.

The decision in *Stirling v Brougham* had been based on the fact that the bank's claim was for a sum of money which had been received by the bank from the council. It was not a claim for a sum of money which had been received by the bank from the council.

He was satisfied, for the reasons given by the judge, that it was a case in which it was appropriate that compound interest should be awarded.

Lord Slynn and Lord Lloyd delivered opinions agreeing with Lord Browne-Wilkinson that the appeal should be allowed.

Solicitors: Nabarro Nathanson; Travers Smith Braithwaite.

not only with the law as it stood but with any anticipated development of it. Applying conventional principles of resulting trust, the bank's claim must fail.

Stirling v Brougham was a bewildering authority: no single ratio decidendi could be detected; all the reasoning was open to serious objection; it had only been intended to deal with cases where there were no trade creditors in competition; and the reasoning was incapable of application where there were such creditors.

The House of Lords should now unequivocally and finally reject the concept of the claim for money had and received was based on an implied contract. His Lordship would overrule *Stirling v Brougham* on that point.

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precedent that a trust arose. There was no basis for imposing a resulting trust in the present case and his Lordship therefore rejected the bank's submission that it had been entitled to proceed by way of an equitable proprietary claim.

The central question was whether there was jurisdiction in equity to award compound interest. If the equitable jurisdiction did not extend to apply in a case such as the present, English law would be revealed as incapable of doing full justice.

The reasoning that would restrict the equitable jurisdiction to award compound interest to cases where the claim was proprietary in nature (see *Kleinwort Benson Ltd v South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council* (1994) 4 All ER 972) was technical and unrealistic. There was jurisdiction in equity to award compound interest in the case also of personal claims.

Could that jurisdiction be exercised in aid of common law remedies such as, for example, a personal remedy in restitution, to repair the deficiencies of the common law?

The situation was no different from that in which, in the absence of jurisdiction at common law to order discovery, equity had stepped in to enable justice to be done in common law actions by ordering the defendant to make discovery on oath.

His Lordship could see no reason why the equitable jurisdiction to award compound interest should not be exercised in a case such as the present.

He did not consider that the statutory power to award interest inhibited that course of action. It was true that section 3(1) of the 1934 Act had not authorised the giving of interest upon interest, but his Lordship could not see that it would be inconsistent with the intention then expressed by Parliament later to extend the existing equitable jurisdiction to award compound interest to enforcement of court orders.

Lord Slynn and Lord Lloyd delivered opinions agreeing with Lord Browne-Wilkinson that the appeal should be allowed.

Solicitors: Nabarro Nathanson; Travers Smith Braithwaite.

action should nevertheless proceed in England, then the relevant facts were for the plaintiff to prove and the court's discretion had to be exercised in the light of the facts so found.

The second main issue of law was whether the judge was correct to have regard solely to the situation as it was shown to be at the date of the hearing before him.

The defendant's application had been properly made under Order 12, rule 8(1)(b) of the Rules of the Supreme Court and simultaneously under the inherent jurisdiction of the court. A stay was different from an order setting aside the writ or service for all time, subject to appeal. The court in its discretion could always lift a stay, if suitable grounds were shown.

The question was whether the affidavit evidence in support of the application justified making the order applied for. The evidence had to be directed to the situation when the application was made.

When the defendant disputed the court's jurisdiction in the proceedings and sought, for example, to set aside the writ or service of the writ or the discharge of an order giving leave to serve or extending the validity of the writ, the relevant date was when the event in question took place.

Where a stay was applied for, the court should also have regard to the situation at the date of the hearing. If only to avoid the absurdity of ordering a stay which was, in effect, a permanent stay, the court should have regard to the change of circumstances.

If the circumstances had changed in favour of the defendant, it was not a ground for holding that the original application should have been granted, but it could found an application to lift the stay, although only in extreme circumstances, where a fresh application would succeed out of time. The position in that regard was the same under Order 12, rule 8 and under the inherent jurisdiction of the court.

Contrary to the judge's findings, Kuwait had not been shown to be available to the plaintiff in a practical sense as an alternative forum for the resolution of the dispute.

Solicitors: Landau & Scanlan; Denton Hall.

Justification defence not available

Stern v Piper and Others
Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Simon Brown and Sir Ralph Gibson
[Judgment May 21]

A defence of justification was not available in an action for defamation where the alleged defamations consisted in publishing extracts from an affirmation in a pending lawsuit.

The Court of Appeal so held allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, William George Stern, against the refusal by Mr Justice Drake on March 15, 1995, of an application to strike out part of the defence of Allan Piper, Clive Wolman and Associated Newspapers Ltd in an action for libel.

Mr James Price, QC, for the plaintiff; Mr David Eady, QC and Mr Manuel Barca, QC, for the defendants.

LORD JUSTICE HIRST said *The Mail on Sunday* had published on January 4, 1994 an article concerning the plaintiff, who had been declared bankrupt in 1978 and discharged in 1985.

The article was headed "Stern falls into an old trap with a '£3m debt'" and asserted that the plaintiff had "allegedly failed to honour debts of more than £3m". It referred to a pending High Court action against the plaintiff and companies with which he was associated and quoted a number of allegations made in an affirmation sworn by Seymour Gordon, a senior partner in the London firm Lipkin Gorman.

The plaintiff had brought proceedings against Mr Piper, the city editor of *The Mail on Sunday*, Mr Wolman, the editor and Associated Newspapers, the proprietor.

The defendants pleaded justification on the footing that the words were substantially true and in so far as they meant that the plaintiff was again in financial trouble, and in that he was involved in High Court proceedings in which he was accused of the matters averred in the affirmation.

Mr Justice Drake had refused to order that the plea of justification be struck out as disclosing no reasonable defence and being vexatious and an abuse of the court.

His Lordship reviewed the history of the well established reputation rule that "it is no defence to an action for defamation for the defendant to prove that he was merely repeating what he has been told".

Duncan and Neill on Defamation (2nd edition (1983) paragraph 11.16).

The rule had been given un-

qualified endorsement as settled law by the Privy Council in *Truth (NZ) Ltd v Phillip Holloway* (1960) 1 WLR 997 and had been approved by the House of Lords in *Lewis v Daily Telegraph Ltd* (1964) AC 234.

The present case was concerned with a report of statements in an affirmation, which palpably fell directly within the rule, since it was essentially hearsay.

Mr Eady had relied on decisions of the Court of Appeal in *Cudam v Beaverbrook Newspapers Ltd* (1959) 1 QB 413 and *Waters v Sunday Pictorial Newspapers Ltd* (1961) 1 WLR 967.

The former case created no difficulty. His Lordship thought it acceptable that a statement that a writ or equivalent civil proceeding had been issued, or for that matter an indictment or similar criminal proceeding had been laid, might be capable of conveying no more than the fact that the relevant proceedings had in fact been launched; moreover, and more important, there was no hearsay problem.

The *Waters* case presented more difficulty and could only be explained on the basis that the statements reported were judicial pronouncements made in open court, and therefore fell into a special category.

For his part, His Lordship regarded *Waters* as one of the outer fringes of that class of case and considered it should not be followed save on similar facts.

His Lordship fully accepted Mr Eady's submission that the defence of justification might be maintainable where a defence of privilege would fail.

But it was significant that privilege only protected reports of proceedings in open court, and that its foundation was that those proceedings took place in public, so that the public in general should have access to fair and accurate reports thereof, for reasons of public policy.

If reports of affidavits, or other court documents not produced in open court were to have the protection of privilege extended to them, it could only be done by straining the unlikely event of such a reform, it was unthinkable that considerations of accuracy and fairness would not require both sides' allegations to be reported, and not, as here, only one side's.

The one-sidedness of the present publication vitiated the justice of applying the reputation rule. His Lordship did not accept that to do that would have a dire effect on freedom of the press.

The media would be free to

report the issue of proceedings in both civil and criminal cases and would have the full protection of privilege for fair and accurate reports of all proceedings in open court, giving ample scope for keeping the public properly informed.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said the reputation rule was specifically designed to prevent a jury from deciding that a particular class of publication, a publication conveying rumour, hearsay, allegation or repetition, was true or alternatively bore a lesser defamatory meaning than would attach to the original allegation. By definition, but for the rule, those findings would otherwise be open to the jury on the facts; why else the need for a rule of law in the first place?

Mr Eady argued that the rule had no application to "second order" allegations, the reporting of allegations made in particular in the context of the administration of justice.

However, in that very context, the strict operation of the rule was tempered both by privilege and by such decisions as *Cudam v Beaverbrook Newspapers*.

Absolute privilege attached to all the various documents, pleadings, affidavits, statements and the like, brought into being for legal proceedings when being used for that purpose and to fair and accurate contemporaneous reports by newspapers of proceedings in open court.

Qualified privilege attached to such reports of proceedings in open court as were not contemporaneous or published by newspapers. Those were actionable on proof of malice.

There were occasions when a defence of justification might be maintainable when the defence of privilege would fail. But that did nothing to diminish the force of Mr Price's argument that, if the reputation rule could be avoided in a case like the present, then much of the law of privilege was otiose.

The very existence of the law of privilege surely postulated that otherwise such reports would fall foul of the reputation rule. *Cudam v Beaverbrook Newspapers* and *Waters v Sunday Pictorial Newspapers* should be regarded as exceptions to the reputation rule. They struck an acceptable balance between the public interest in freedom of speech, the right to disseminate and receive information, and the public interest in protecting people's reputations.

Solicitors: Manches & Co; Mishcon de Reya.

Evidence of breath test insufficient for driver's conviction

Evans v Director of Public Prosecutions

Before Lord Justice Pill and Mr Justice Newman
[Judgment May 9]

Where a defendant was charged with driving with excess alcohol in his urine, evidence of alcohol in his breath specimen was not sufficiently relevant or probative of the offence as charged.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so stated when allowing an appeal brought by Cyril Evans by way of case stated from the dismissal of his appeal by Welshpool Crown Court (Judge R. D. G. David, QC and Justices) from his conviction by Newton Justices of driving with excess alcohol in his urine contrary to section 51(a) of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

Miss Gwynor Lloyd for Mr Evans; Mr Nicholas Mason for the prosecution.

MR JUSTICE NEWMAN said that Mr Evans had provided two specimens of breath at the police station on a Lion Intoximeter 3000 device which gave disparate readings.

The police officer concluded that the specimens were unreliable and requested an alternative specimen. A urine specimen was provided which showed 200 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of urine.

At the hearing, in answer to the defendant's submission that the urine sample was unlawfully taken, the prosecution had relied on the fact that the machine was deemed unreliable in order to lay the ground for the admissibility of the urine specimen taken.

In the event, the crown court found that the Intoximeter was operating properly, therefore the officer was wrong to ask for an alternative specimen.

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THE TIMES

Regina v Butt

Before Lord Justice Stuart-Smith,
Mr Justice Nelson and Judge
Capstick, QC

[Judgment May 17]

It was generally undesirable for husband and wife, or other partners living together, to appear as counsel on opposite sides in the same criminal matter since it might give rise to an apprehension that the proper conduct of the case had been in some way affected by that personal relationship.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so stated in dismissing an appeal by Peter James Gilbert Butt against his conviction in May 1995 at Bristol Crown Court (Mr Recorder Robin A. Miller and a jury) of burglary for which he was sentenced to 30 months community service.

Mr Robert Duval, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals for the appellant; Mr P. D. C.

Warren for the Crown; neither counsel appeared before the judge.

MR JUSTICE NELSON, giving the judgment of the court, said that on the second day of the trial, counsel for the prosecution was replaced by counsel who cohabited with defence counsel. The appellant was told of the situation and agreed to sign a note enabling his counsel to continue to represent him and allowing the trial to proceed.

It was contended on appeal that one counsel should have withdrawn from the case and that, before he signed an agreement to his counsel continuing, the appellant should have (i) been given more time to consider the situation, (ii) the matter should have been referred to the recorder who should have considered it in open court, and (iii) the appellant should have received independent advice.

The Lordships did not accept those propositions. It was a simple

decision for the appellant to make, upon which he had a very clear view, the judge could have agreed to adjourn the matter but beyond that he had no power and was in no position to advise and independent advice was not relevant to such a simple issue.

If the appellant was left with a sense of grievance, their Lordships did not think he could justifiably complain that he was not told all the facts. There was no material irregularity in the particular case.

However, it was generally undesirable for husband and wife, or other partners living together, to appear as counsel on opposite sides in the same criminal matter for that might give rise to an apprehension that the proper conduct of the case had in some way been affected by that personal relationship.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Avon.

Cohabiting counsel should avoid same criminal trials

Regina v Butt

Before Lord Justice Stuart-Smith,
Mr Justice Nelson and Judge
Capstick, QC

[Judgment May 17]

It was generally undesirable for husband and wife, or other partners living together, to appear as counsel on opposite sides in the same criminal matter since it might give rise to an apprehension that the proper conduct of the case had been in some way affected by that personal relationship.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so stated in dismissing an appeal by Peter James Gilbert Butt against his conviction in May 1995 at Bristol Crown Court (Mr Recorder Robin A. Miller and a jury) of burglary for which he was sentenced to 30 months community service.

Mr Robert Duval, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals for the appellant; Mr P. D. C.

Warren for the Crown; neither counsel appeared before the judge.

MR JUSTICE NELSON, giving the judgment of the court, said that on the second day of the trial, counsel for the prosecution was replaced by counsel who cohabited with defence counsel. The appellant was told of the situation and agreed to sign a note enabling his counsel to continue to represent him and allowing the trial to proceed.

It was contended on appeal that one counsel should have withdrawn from the case and that, before he signed an agreement to his counsel continuing, the appellant should have (i) been given more time to consider the situation, (ii) the matter should have been referred to the recorder who should have considered it in open court, and (iii) the appellant should have received independent advice.

The Lordships did not accept those propositions. It was a simple

decision for the appellant to make, upon which he had a very clear view, the judge could have agreed to adjourn the matter but beyond that he had no power and was in no position to advise and independent advice was not relevant to such a simple issue.

If the appellant was left with a sense of grievance, their Lordships did not think he could justifiably complain that he was not told all the facts. There was no material irregularity in the particular case.

However, it was generally undesirable for husband and wife, or other partners living together, to appear as counsel on opposite sides in the same criminal matter for that might give rise to an apprehension that the proper conduct of the case had in some way been affected by that personal relationship.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Avon.

Court of Appeal
defence
able



FILM 1

A Midwest kidnap tale treated with mordant humour. *Fargo* is the Coen brothers' best movie yet



FILM 2

A script from Tarantino, and gore by the bucket, but *From Dusk Till Dawn* proves to be immature mayhem

THE TIMES
ARTS



FILM 3

Bohemian Paris in the 1940s is evoked in the stylish *My Life and Times with Antonin Artaud*



FILM 4

Robert Lepage dips into his own past for the plot of his first movie, *The Confessional*

CINEMA: Geoff Brown reviews 'the best American film of the year so far', the Cannes award-winning thriller, *Fargo*

Coen brothers come close to great outdoors

As the film begins, a dense, all-white screen is slowly transformed into snow particles falling heavily. Suddenly a car breaks through the flat terrain. A signpost identifies the locale, on the border of Minnesota and North Dakota. Previous Coen brothers films such as *The Hudsucker Proxy* give the sense of being hand-tooled in a studio light years away from ordinary life; but, right from the beginning, the magnificent *Fargo* has that beauty and urgency that can only come from exposure to the real world.

Joel and Ethan Coen know this world, too. They grew up in suburban Minneapolis. They know the Midwest winters. They know the state's Scandinavian stock, the peculiar speech inflections, the laconic tone, the ability of men to stand still, immersed in parkas, talking politely about nothing. "Okay-dokie, thanks a bunch!" says Frances McDormand's heavily pregnant police chief, investigating her first homicide. "Oh geez!" cries the lined, rubber face of William H. Macy, the hapless car salesman whose bizarre plan to wipe out his debts sets the plot in motion. And almost everyone says "Yah" rather than "Yes". This is not mocking caricature; this is affectionate comedy.

No previous film from the Coen brothers has contained such human characters, or shown such moral concern over acts of violence. The themes that *Fargo* touches on — greed, duplicity, the bizarre workings of fate — can be traced back to the team's first feature, *Blood Simple*. But now the masters of genre pastiche have more than puppets to deal with and, as Steve Buscemi and Peter Stormare's blundering thugs leave a trail of blood smeared across the snow, we feel both the pain and the dark hilarity of a kidnapping wheeze gone horribly wrong.

"It's real sound, it's all worked out," Macy tells his hired accomplices. Arranging

Fargo
Warner West End
18, 97 mins
The Coen brothers strike cinematic gold in the Midwest
From Dusk Till Dawn
Odeon West End
18, 107 mins
Juvenile romp with cult credentials
My Life and Times with Antonin Artaud
ICA Cinema, 90 mins
Poets, drugs and Left Bank cafes

for his own wife's kidnapping in order to extract a fat ransom from her wealthy father can scarcely be called "real sound"; and much of the film's pleasure lies in watching Macy's small-town jerk struggling ahead with his scheme even when it collapses underneath him. It is a wonderful comic performance from an actor most familiar from David Mamet movies.

The heart of the film, though, lies with McDormand (off-screen, she is Joel Coen's wife). Her police chief Marge Gunderson emerges from a domestic cocoon to face the snow, the blood and the heinous crimes; and the contentment with which she faces life helps to put the characters' nastier activities in perspective. Slow but shrewd, she waddles deliciously through the clues, mistress of the deadpan remark or the seemingly innocent question.

Joel Coen, who won the Cannes Film Festival's Best Director award, shows masterful control over the images, and encourages British cinematographer Roger Deakins to find eerie beauty even in a snow-capped parking lot, criss-crossed by shadows from the wintry sun.

The opening title proclaims bluntly that "This is a true story" and identifies the

year, 1987, when the events occurred. But no film could be further from the shallow realism of most movie dramas ripped from life. In the Coens' deft hands, we stare at the world and its people afresh. Warm, dark, grotesque and beautiful all at once, this is the year's best American movie to date.

Where *Fargo* is perfectly poised, *From Dusk Till Dawn* is pure hurly-burly, hurled at the screen by two cult talents, Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino, determined to have fun. Tarantino's script was originally written in 1990 for a special effects company which wanted to showcase goo and gore. So Tarantino gathered his characters — two gangster brothers and a preacher's family, taken hostage — and sent them off for a rendezvous at a sleazy Mexican bar. This turned out to be a vampire hang-out. Necks got bitten, heads cut off. Glop oozed everywhere.

The script lay idle until Tarantino zoomed into the stratosphere. Then the project was reactivated and assigned to another fashionable director, Rodriguez. Tarantino rewrote his juvenilia, and stayed to act: that's him behind the glasses, the more psychotic of the Gecko brothers, the one who casually kills anyone in the way as they escape from their latest bank robbery. The other brother is George Clooney, the luminary from the TV series *ER* making a forceful bid for big screen stardom.

Obviously, this is not the work of mature artists. Tarantino and Rodriguez spatter childish jokes over the screen, gleefully ransack old movies, and switch genres at the drop of a hat, from road-movie thriller to vampire gore feast. Other big names roped into the romp include Harvey Keitel, uneasily cast as the preacher uncertain of his faith, and Juliette Lewis, the daughter on the receiving end of Tarantino's lust.

There is no finesse anywhere, and the makers' enthusiasm for expending their



"Mistress of the deadpan remark or the seemingly innocent question": Frances McDormand as the police chief investigating her first homicide in *Fargo*

talents on blatant trash will not be appreciated by all. You either give in to the outrageous, disreputable and lengthy mayhem, or you head for the exit.

If you were hosting an elegant dinner party, it would be best not to invite Antonin Artaud, poet, actor, theoretician and promoter of a Theatre of Cruelty. History suggests this: so does the absorbing French film *My Life and Times with Antonin Artaud*. At one point he says: "I'll take a knife and hammer and attack people. All I want is opium and grub." He means it, too.

But if Artaud would not make the best dinner guest, he makes a fascinating subject for a movie. Gérard Mordillat's film, attractively shot in crisp black and white and set in the mid-1940s, deals with the last months of the man's life. Released after nine years in a mental asylum, he haunts the Paris cafes in beret and scarf, returning at night to a nursing home.

A young, ambitious poet, Jacques Prevel, becomes his

acolyte. "All the opium in Paris must be at Artaud's disposal," Artaud grandly declares, "so he can finish his work." Prevel obliges, rounding up drugs from the capital's chemists. In place of a plot, the film sends these friends walking and talking, sometimes yelling, all over Paris, before cancer and drugs carry off Artaud in 1948. By that time Prevel is not the picture of health himself.

Mordillat has something of an Artaud obsession: besides this film, made in 1993, he has completed two documentaries on Artaud and his companion. Not that he showers us with facts: the strength of Sami Frey's riveting central performance is quite enough to pull us inside Artaud's soul.

The visuals have their own power. True, detail may not always be exact: these post-war bohemians travel on the Métro in modern trains. But Mordillat catches the smoky ambience of café life, the air thick with the fumes of idling intellects; and Marc Barbé's face has the right period cut as Prevel.

'A mediocre TV film at best'

Every week, young film fans discuss the new releases...

FARGO
Kerry Henderson, 18: Occasionally funny but slow-moving and hard to get into. A real letdown.

David Whipple, 22: Too slow and surprisingly lacking in the depths you would expect from the Coen brothers. Billed as a "real life" movie, it achieves its objective but fails to interest.

Rebecca Richards, 20: Realistic and well-acted drama, although the unusual events in the plot failed to evoke emotion. Generally enjoyable.

Tom Smith, 19: An appalling slow movie with no twists, plot, content or interest. This would be a mediocre TV movie at best.

FROM DUSK TILL DAWN
Kerry: Fantastic. A fast-moving thriller which suddenly becomes a vampire movie



with attitude. It's cool and it's just got to be seen.

David: *Reservoir Dogs* meets *Lost Boys* meets *The A-Team*. Classic movie with an incredible twist halfway through.

Rebecca: An enjoyable action-packed beginning that deteriorates into an unreal fantasy with mindless violence. Not really my type of film, but would appeal to those who love blood and gore.

Tom: This film has an unbelievable kick. What has become Tarantino's genre is merged with comic surrealism. This makes for a rollercoaster of style and humour. Brilliant.

MY LIFE AND TIMES WITH ANTONIN ARTAUD

Kerry: French films are either very funny or very painful. Unfortunately this particular one falls into the latter category. Strictly for aspiring intellectuals only.

David: This is the story of a young playwright's reduction into a drug-induced misery through his association with a tortured genius. Unfortunately, the only misery induced in this film is incurred by watching it. Not my cup of tea.

Rebecca: Depressing and monotonous drama that lacks focus and drive — it required all my stamina and patience to watch it through to the end. The acting was mediocre and it was difficult to appreciate Artaud's poetry and philosophy.

Tom: My first impression was how stylish this film looked. I found this bio-pic interesting, moving and informative. I was left wanting to know more about the man.

DEGAS: BEYOND IMPRESSIONISM — DAY SIX

Richard Cork continues his guide to highlights of the current exhibition at the National Gallery



"In the same way that the maid cleanses her mistress, so Degas aimed at purging his art of all superfluities": *Woman at her bath*, c.1893-98. Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto

Degas preferred to avoid showing his bathers immersed in the tub. This was because he wanted to concentrate on the figure itself, unimpeded by water. So even in this picture, where the woman is engaged in the business of washing, she remains seated on the end of the bath. The pose enables Degas to emphasise the fullness of her buttocks with a sculptor's sense of rounded form.

But there is muscular tension, too, in the way her back leans forward over the water. Steadying herself with one hand on the side of the bath, she holds her hair up with the other as the maid pours water over the newly exposed part of her shoulders. It is a simple enough act, but Degas heightens the meaning of the scene by

various means. The drapes hanging above the bath give the picture an overwhelming sense of richness, and the light from below casts a glow on the front of the woman's body, burnishing it. So the pouring of the water is charged with additional significance, suggesting that Degas may have seen it as a symbol of pictorial purification. In the same way that the maid cleanses her mistress, so Degas aimed in his later years at purging his art of all superfluities and concentrating on essentials alone.

● Degas: Beyond Impressionism is at the National Gallery until Aug 26 (tickets from First Call, 0171-420 0000)
● Tomorrow, Richard Cork discusses *After the bath: woman drying herself* (c.1894-96)

The autobiographer turns the page

Multi-disciplined Robert Lepage tells Michael Church about *The Confessional*, his first film as a director

Denis Arcand's film *Jésus of Montreal* used a crucifixion play to polarise the clash between conservatives and radicals which is the permanent bane of Quebec. Among its fictional actors there were confrontations too, of which one was memorable: a haunted, paranoid Christ versus a cynically laconic Pilate. Christ was played by Lothaire Bluteau, and Pilate by Robert Lepage. Off-screen they got on well enough, but when the film was over they went their separate ways.

Lepage had just taken over the reins of the Toronto-based Théâtre de Repère, the Canadian counterpart to the National Theatre, and was getting into his stride with the sequence of surreal dramas which have since made him famous. Bluteau, meanwhile, became a wanderer. He won plaudits in London as an ecstatic, self-immolatory murderer in a play called *Being At Home with Claude*. He starred in Barrie Keeffe's Falklands play *Gotcha*, and in Bruce Beresford's Algonquin-Indian epic *The Black Robe*. He played a Mongol in Sally Potter's *Orlando* and a publisher of intellectual porn in Mary Harron's *I Shot Andy Warhol*.

Meeting him on one of his stints in London, I found myself wondering why he had never starred in Lepage's productions. They may have been on different sides in the secession debate — Lepage a passionate Quebec separatist and Bluteau a passionate integrationist — but, onstage, Bluteau radiated the unworldliness which was Lepage's keynote. Furthermore, Bluteau is a twin — and twins, or alter egos, are one of Lepage's



"The Confessional is my experiment in storytelling," says Canada's Robert Lepage

obsessions. Artistically, they were peas in a pod.

Next week, Lepage's film *The Confessional* opens in London, starring Lothaire Bluteau. It's about brothers, alter egos, suicides, and the fusion of orient and occident: Lepage's perennial themes, with a murky top-spin giving full scope to Bluteau's gift for dramatic paranoia. The plot juxtaposes the Quebec of 1952 with the Quebec of 1989; Hitchcock's murder-mystery *Confess* — filmed there in 1952 — is the cinematic link for a rumination on ecclesiastical corruption then and now.

Like everything else Lepage has done, it's autobiographi-

cal. He has even cast his own middle-aged sister as the story's archetypal aunt-figure.

"The casting agency couldn't understand the sort of person I was after, but she knew exactly," Lepage says.

The Confessional is his first shot at film direction, and he's engagingly diffident about it. "I needed coaching all the way, and I don't think I've yet found my cinematic style." Some sequences recall the work of that other autobiographer Terence Davies, but they never settle for his smooth, lyrical line: Lepage plays with ideas in a spirit much closer to that of his hero Cocteau. Hitchcock is not a

hero, but he has borrowed from him: "I have tried to be first produced ten years ago. One of his friends was murdered, and Lepage, himself a suspect, was cast by the police in their own bizarre dramatisation of what they thought had happened. The truth, when it emerged, was full of Chanderlesque coincidences."

Only to Lepage could such things happen; only Lepage could transmute them into drama.

● The Confessional opens in Britain next week
● *Elsinore* is at the Edinburgh Festival (King's Theatre) from August 12 to 16

The Confessional is my experiment in storytelling.

His stage background did come in handy. "Film people regard those of us who have come from the theatre as clumsy and over-literal, but I regard film people as ludicrously hooked on waste. 'We'll take care of that in the cutting room,' they say, or 'We'll do that in the lab'."

"I've done things on the spot — fade-sequences which they told me were impossible — simply by using good old theatrical lights, and getting my actors to crawl across the set, below the sight-line of the cameras."

One by-product of his new approach to narrative is *Elsinore*, the one-man version of *Hamlet* he is bringing to the Edinburgh Festival. "This is my first shot at *Hamlet*, and I'll certainly come back to it in another way. I didn't want to inflict my notions on other actors, this first time round."

Lepage has just finished shooting *Polygraphe*, his second film, to be unveiled at the Venice Film Festival in October. This may sound mathematical, but is actually lurid in the extreme: a reworking of the autobiographical play he first produced ten years ago. One of his friends was murdered, and Lepage, himself a suspect, was cast by the police in their own bizarre dramatisation of what they thought had happened. The truth, when it emerged, was full of Chanderlesque coincidences.

Only to Lepage could such things happen; only Lepage could transmute them into drama.

● The Confessional opens in Britain next week
● *Elsinore* is at the Edinburgh Festival (King's Theatre) from August 12 to 16



CHOICE 1

Alan Bennett's
Habeas Corpus
is revived by
Sam Mendes

VENUE: In preview at
the Donmar Warehouse



CHOICE 2

Amanda Rocco
sings Mahler and
Beethoven with
the RPO

VENUE: Tonight at
the Barbican

THE TIMES
ARTS

VIDEOS

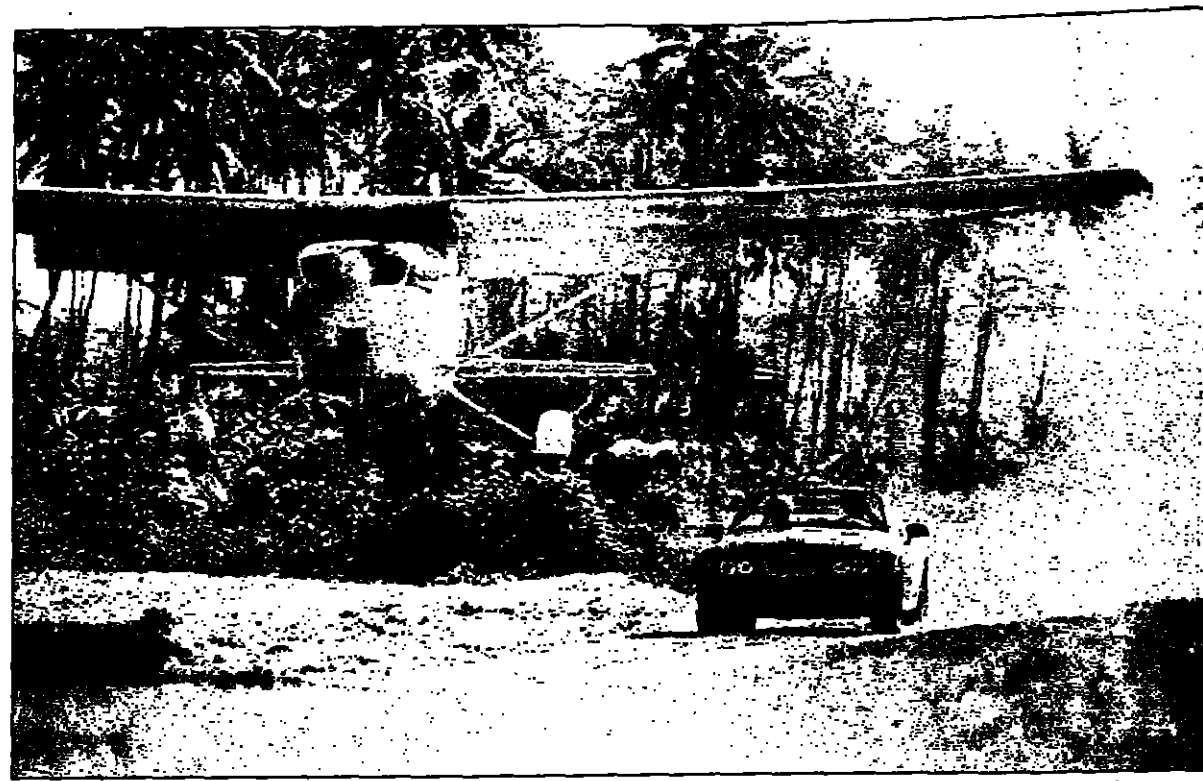
The best Bond
since Connery?
Pierce Brosnan
hits the small
screen in the
thrilling *Goldeneye*



RECORDS

... while, on
CD, Daniel
Barenboim takes
an uninhibited
approach to
Strauss's *Elektra*

Sparkle in a Goldeneye



Follow that plane: action-man Pierce Brosnan proves that James Bond can still cut the mustard in *Goldeneye*

NEW ON VIDEO

GOLDENEYE

MGM/UA, £2.95

HE MAY be a sexist, misogynist dinosaur, but Ian Fleming's 007 can still cut the mustard. Pierce Brosnan's sardonic wit is crucial to the film's success: so is the blend of affectionate self-mockery and slam-bang action. The plot is too distended, and Alan Cumming's Russian computer geek grates on the nerves, but after the bruising, high-tech blockbusters of Stallone, Schwarzenegger and Bruce Willis, Bond's latest battle to save the world from destruction appears almost charming. Available to rent.

LE CRIME DE MONSIEUR

LANGE

Connoisseur, PG, 1935

JEAN RENOIR's marvellously buoyant film, infused with the spirit of the Popular Front, concerns publishing house workers who take over the business in the absence of their tyrannical and womanising boss (Jules Berry). Jacques Prévert collaborated with Renoir on the quietly nutty script: together they ensure the revolutionary process has never seemed so comic, so governed by human frailties. The print is prefaced with a five-minute introduction by Renoir himself.

HEAVY

Artificial Eye, 15, 1995

SLOW, quiet and absorbing American independent film about frustrated lives from writer-director James Mangold. The central character (Fruit Taylor) is a pizza chef at a truckstop café in upstate New York. He is fat and desperately shy. For company there is Mom (Shelley Winters), a world-weary waitress (Deborah Harry) and a

college drop-out (Liv Tyler, subsequently picked by Burt Reynolds for his new film *Stealing Beauty*). There is no complicated plot: just some forlorn people rubbing against each other. Available to rent.

STRIKE!

Tartan, PG, 1924

NO OTHER film better expresses the artistic and political fervour of Russia in the 1920s. Eisenstein's first feature documents a factory strike with electrifying élan. Montage, symbolism, cari-

cature: all his tricks are brought into play. The print quality is reasonable, so is the unidentified music score, though it is a pity that the translated titles, many of them phrased like revolutionary slogans, use bland modern lettering.

THE HORSEMAN ON THE ROOF

Fox Guild, 15, 1995

AFTER *Cyrano de Bergerac*, director Jean-Paul Rappeneau now makes a ravishing spectacle from Jean Giono's

novel of romance, heroism and cholera in 1830s Provence. No cholera epidemic in history has ever looked so lovely, and the pictorial splendours drain away some narrative energy. Olivier Martinez cuts a stiff figure as the Italian hussar who takes to the roofs when panic-stricken townsfolk turn hysterical; for the best scenes you must wait for Juliette Binoche's enigmatic noblewoman to appear. Available to rent.

GEOFF BROWN

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Puritan psalms; Adams weaves a dream; Elektra's animal passion

VOCAL

Hilary Finch

VARIOUS
Goostly Psalms
His Majesty's Clerks/Hillier
Harmonia Mundi
907128***

THE severe gaze of a primitive head from the 1709 gravestone of Wakefield, Massachusetts, transfixes the potential buyer of this new and rare compilation of Anglo-American

salms from 1550 to 1800. These are the "plain tunes" of the Puritans who left the England of John Dowland to settle in America.

Collections such as *The Massachusetts Bay Psalm Book* developed the English cathedral style of Orlando Gibbons and his contemporaries into nicely rough "fuguing tunes", word-painted as naive as that on wood, harmonic confrontations as vigorous as their theological counterparts in matters of sin and death. Here is William Billings of Boston and his

robust war song to the tune *Chesler*, and here, too, is Benjamin West's mournful *Watford* and Abraham Wood's gentle *Worcester*. These psalm settings ring out in fresh-faced performances.

ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

ADAMS
Violin Concerto; Shaker
Loops
Kremer/London Symphony
Orchestra/Nagano;
Orchestra of St Luke's/
Adams
Nonesuch 7559-7360-2***

JOHN ADAMS has always deployed minimalist techniques with more imagination than most. In his 1993 Violin Concerto he leaves the strait-jacket of repetitive ostinato behind in favour of something altogether more rewarding.

The Concerto was co-commissioned by the New York City Ballet and the dance impulse is fundamental to it.

The first movement is strongly propelled, with a

striding figure forming the aural backdrop, against which the solo violin dances rhapsodically with virtuoso abandon. In the second movement, a chaconne, the violin sings rather than dances: a long cantilena is woven through a haunting orchestral texture. The subtitle of the chaconne is "Body through which the dream flows" — a poetic image of the violin as a dream passing through the orchestral fabric. The finale is a frenzied, Bacchic orgy, with motoric syncopations adding drive. Gidon Kremer is alive to the poetic as to the dynamic elements, and the ensemble of the London Symphony Orchestra under Kent Nagano is invigoratingly taut.

Shaker Loops is an earlier piece that began life in 1977 as a quartet, being reworked first as a septet and then for string orchestra (as heard here). Closer to traditional, 1970s-style minimalism, *Shaker Loops* is less inventive than the Violin Concerto but is persuasively delivered by the Orchestra of St Luke's under the composer's direction.

OPERA

John Higgins

STRAUSS
Elektra
Polaski/Marc/Meier/Botha/
Struckmann/Berlin
Staatskapelle/Barenboim
Teldec 4509-99175-2

"A WILDCAT," claims one of the palace maids when Elektra makes her first appearance in Strauss's opera of vengeance. Barenboim and his lead soprano, Deborah Polaski, take their cue from the observation. Bestial behaviour, including Klytemnestra's parade of sacrificial animals, runs through much of the work and Barenboim lets his Berlin players revel in it. The howls which arise from the orchestra, especially the brass, make *The Rite of Spring* sound like *The Teddy Bears' Picnic*.

Polaski adopts a similarly uninhibited approach, throwing herself into the music but making sure that it is properly sung, unlike some Elektras who overdo the eldritch shriek. Conductor and soprano know precisely when to unleash their climaxes in a way to rattle the listener. And they know how to handle the Straussian calm which inevitably follows. Elektra's monologue after the return of Orestes is superbly handled, a moment of serene rationality before blood bursts out again in the House of Atreus.

The partnership recalls that of Solti and Nilsson 30 years ago, still available on Decca. But Barenboim's supporting cast has less class, with the exception of Waltraud Meier's repellant Klytemnestra. Alessandra Marc's Chrysothemis sounds plummy and too placid; she does not turn her scenes with Elektra into real confrontations. Falk Struckmann's Orestes is routine, although admittedly it is an unrewarding part. These shortcomings just nudge an otherwise thrilling set out of the three-star bracket.

★ Worth hearing
★★ Worth considering
★★★ Worth buying

LONDON

HABEAS CORPUS: Tenorist cast for the revival of Alan Bennett's marvellously modern farce: Brenda Blethyn, Cole Irvine, Imelda Staunton, Jon Bruford, Nicholas Woodeson, and Sam Mendes directing. Donmar Warehouse, Earlham St, WC2 0JH (0171-369 1732). Preview begins tonight, 8pm. Opens June 5.

BLOOD ON THE FLOOR: Ensemble Modern gives the world premiere performances of Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Blood on the Floor* — an exploration of elation and drug addiction, in nine movements. With John Scott, guitar, Peter Enns, drums, and Martin Robertson, saxophones. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-950 4242). Tonight and tomorrow, 8pm.

MOZART DOUBLE: The Academy of Ancient Music under Paul Goodwin performs Mozart's comic miniature, *The Impresario*, with the soprano Judith Howarth and Elizabeth Vadi, and a semi-staged version by Opera Theatre Company (Dublin) of *Zedda*. Promenade Hall, Great Court Street, WC2 0JH (0171-312 1388). BOC Covent Garden Festival box office. Tonight and Saturday, 7.30pm.

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC: Danish Gade conducts the orchestra in Schubert's *Rosamunde Overtures*. Amenda Rocco joins for ten.

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Maxey

Beethoven's exquisite concert was *Artificial Eye* and *Goldeneye* (see p. 38).

ELSEWHERE

BATH: Wells Cathedral provides a suitably grand setting for an all-Russian programme of emotional extremes. Alexander Lazarev conducts the Philharmonie Orchestra in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*, Shostakovich's *Symphony of Festive and Patriotic Songs*, and Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No 6 in B minor, Pathétique*. With the Bath Festival Chorus under Nigel Parris. Wells Cathedral, Bath, BA1 1RN. (01225 465555). Tonight, 7.30pm.

KINGSDRIFT: Thomas Hardy's tragic novel *Time of the Daffodils* is brought to life by the Royal Exchange Middle Theatre in Michael Fry's adaptation. Dore Haines directs. Kingsdrift Theatre, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-950 4242). Tonight and tomorrow, 8pm.

MALVERN

The Malvern Elgar Festival, which lasts until June 9, begins today.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

Seats at all prices

Seats at all prices

Seats at all prices

Seats at all prices

Seats at all prices

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Seats at all prices

NEW RELEASES

ANGUS (12): Fat kid fights off his bullies. Tame tale more than means well. With Charlie Talbot and Kathy Bates. Director: Patrick Read Jones. Warner (0171-369 1732).

UNE FEMME FRANCAISE (15): High-class, with Emmanuelle Béart and Daniel Auteuil, leading 30 years of French history. Director: Régis Wargnier. Warner (0171-369 1732).

MURDER TREASURE ISLAND (U): Keanu and Milla Jovovich in the Muppet's classic. Joy addition to the Muppet movie saga, with Tim Curry. Director: Brian Henson. Warner (0171-369 1732).

THE BROTHERS (15): Crass, gaudy remake of *La Cage aux Folles*, with Robin Williams and Nathan Lane as the gay couple faced with an inheritance. Director: Michael Nichols. Warner (0171-369 1732).

PRIMAL FEAR (15): Cocky detective Arthur Conan Doyle gets sucked into a device murder case. Superficial thriller, directed by Gregory Hoblit. Warner (0171-369 1732).

SECRETS & LIES (15): Mike Leigh's Cannes triumph: an unbroken but absorbing tale about family life, its pains, bonds, and skeletons. With Brenda Blethyn and Timothy Spall. Warner (0171-369 1732).

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and beyond

on release across the country

on release across the country

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THEATRE

Paula Wilcox and company find few laughs in an outdoor staging of *The Comedy of Errors*



POP

Life after Richey: the Manic Street Preachers strike a celebratory note at the Forum

THE TIMES ARTS



YOUNG ARTS

The famous traditions of Welsh choral singing are being passed to a new generation



RADIO

Yesterday in Parliament is a massive turn-off for listeners — but is it too important to drop?

THEATRE: Braving the weather, Kate Bassett finds few laughs in a Shakespearean comedy under the open sky

Double trouble does not bubble

Granted, Regent's Park is not the place to worry about chic. After all, I was wearing all my clothes at once for this opening night of the Open Air Theatre season (though, mercifully, no rain stopped play). And granted, too, *The Comedy of Errors* is essentially a romp. Shakespeare returned more probably to its central themes later in *Twelfth Night*.

The Comedy of Errors

Regent's Park

Nevertheless, Ian Talbot's staging could surely suggest something a little more profound about people entering the realms of the irrational, escaping responsibilities, spawning dual identities. Ephesus, famed for its wizardry, needs to be less mundane, more of a land of madness and dreams, and the park's woody glade could be such a magical place. Outdoor theatre may not have great pretensions, but surely it can muster up better ensembles and a more coherent vision than here.

Either that, or the production needed to be much funnier. The play certainly has the potential. In Shakespeare's ancient port, a pair of spottish nuns toddle out and sunnily

chime the passing hours. "Bong, bong," they sing and assure the piazza "from on high" that "all's well in Ephesus". Down below, though, the lay-folk are in ever escalating chaos. It is bound to cause havoc when two sets of twins — Identikit masters plus matching servants — are suddenly popping up all over town without meeting each other face to face.

The normally respectable Adriana (Paula Wilcox with striking Greco-Roman features, arcing eyebrows and an alluring wink) is having more than a siesta with a chap who looks exactly like her hubby. At the same time, her legal spouse is hammering on his portico. Antipholus is being barred from his own atrium by a voice claiming to be his servant Dromio while the other Dromio does a metaphysical double-take. The mistaken identities mount up insanely. A courtesan is demanding her ring back. The jeweller wants his cash. The Dromio twins, zig-zagging between masters, are driving everyone round the twist.

The *Comedy of Errors* is chock-a-block with farcical mistakes, not to mention



Four pas in the park: Paula Wilcox, Peter Forbes and Gavin Muir in Ian Talbot's Open Air Theatre production of *The Comedy of Errors*

naughty faux pas. But in this staging the two boys from Syracuse are simply not funny men. The visiting Antipholus could be having a whale of a time. He is getting nookie with his brother's wife without having tied the knot, and is handed a precious necklace without footing the bill. David Cardy seems,

though, lamentably dreary. Even his ardour for Adriana's pretty sister (Debra Beu-mont) is hardly a blaze. Meanwhile Cardy's manservant, Gavin Muir, is not a natural clown. Both Dromio brothers inevitably get endless drubbings. Unfortunately the biffing sessions here are often too clumsily faked to get

much of a laugh. Oopsadaisy. Peter Forbes's resident Antipholus is relatively at home in his part, striding off to the local whorehouse (albeit kinked out as if this involves a Victorian trek up the Amazon). He has a twinkle in his eye. Finding himself heading for the slammer, he roars rather pleasingly. Wilcox's

Adriana is classy and sparky. Judith Paris, as the Abbess who eventually reveals herself as mother of the Antipholus twins, is amusingly superior, rebuking her daughter-in-law for laxity and strictness in one breath.

Overall, however, this production is limp. Ephesus offers a bit of glitter, like gold-sprayed pot plants, but the comic chases are lacklustre. The local tradesmen are snarled in straw bowlers and tailcoats. But Adriana is the only lady with a decent wardrobe. The town fizzes look a mixed bag of Spanish gypsies and belly-dancers. Little here to warm the blood on a chilly night.

Sweet sanctity of Byrd song

CONCERT
I Fagiolini
Purcell Room

come under suspicion, and there is little doubt that the Latin motet became a means through which he could express his Catholic faith. Many of the texts he set draw on the Old Testament theme of the suffering of God's chosen people through persecution at the hands of their oppressors. The sub-text of the brilliantly conceived *Domine Tu Iurasti* or the highly expressive *Deus Venerunt Genes* clearly laments the situation of English Catholics.

I had not previously heard the latter, rarely performed work, and it is without doubt one of Byrd's most expressive pieces. Believed to have been written in response to the martyrdom of the Jesuit priest Edmund Campion in 1581, the text (drawn from Psalm 78), refers to the bodies of the Lord's servants having been "laid out as food for the birds of the air" — a grim meditation on Campion's fate (he was hanged, drawn and quartered). I Fagiolini brought out perfectly the balance between restraint and underlying passion in a powerful and compelling performance.

Indeed, throughout the evening the group responded with absolute conviction to Byrd's settings, from the

breadth and grandeur of *Attollite Portas* and the more concise, prayer-like *Domine Salva Nos*, to the urgency of *Vigilate* and the jubilant *Laudibus in Sanctis*. "Authentic" Latin pronunciation (for example "vigilante") coloured the overall effect, but was never intrusive.

The singers were not afraid to bring out in a soloistic manner the more madrigalian elements of the music, but still more admirable was their feeling for the structure of each work and a sense of total ease with the demanding rhythmic interplay at the heart of much of Byrd's music.

This was also true of Sophie Yates's playing of some of the pieces from *My Lady Nevell's Book* on the virginals — an enticingly mellow-sounding instrument by Mark Ransom. All in all, a very attractive programme that could not but enhance Byrd's standing as a great but still curiously neglected composer.

TESS KNIGHTON

Rich without Richey

POP
Manic Street Preachers
Forum, N5

ALTHOUGH the Manic Street Preachers recently played a few high-profile support slots to both the Stone Roses and Oasis, this was their first headline tour since the disappearance of guitarist Richey Edwards nearly 16 months ago.

Singer-guitarist James Dean Bradfield was completely fired up, moving around the stage as though he was trying to fill the void left by Edwards, playing off bassist Nicky Wire and drummer Sean Moore, while a keyboard player stood so far off to the left that his presence barely intruded on the rest of the band.

The early part of the set included *Australia*, from the new album *Everything Must Go*, which was recorded without Edwards and was largely written by Wire, but Edwards's presence hung over the show just as the ghost of

Black Flowers that Grow in the Sky, one of the last set of lyrics to be written by Edwards, and Bacharach-David's *Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head*.

The rest of the band returned for *This Is Yesterday*, a *Design for Life* and finally *You Love Us*, dedicated, among others, to Arthur Scargill, which made a nice change from the apolitical, or pro-Blair, stance of most of the Manics' contemporaries.

On the way out, someone enthused that it had been "like watching the Clash" — a bit of an exaggeration unless you can imagine the Clash playing to the Alarm's audience — but Bradfield's soulful punk howl, now worn deeper by bitter experience, definitely comes from Joe Strummer's side of the tracks.

Clearly the BBC is unlikely to dump *Yesterday in Parliament* 12 months ahead of an election: the corporation will have enough paranoia to deal with without providing politicians with evidence that someone is trying to get at them. But the BBC should tough it out and politicians should secretly hope it succeeds. Not the least of the reasons why politicians are held in contempt is because they are heard, on *Yesterday in Parliament*, to behave in contemptible ways.

There is a case for *Today in Parliament*, already marginalised to long wave only, where those who want it can find it. But there is no case for inflicting *Yesterday in Parliament* (FM and long wave) on a largely begrudging audience.

ANN SCANLON

The two programmes are known as "Tip" and "Yip" in BBC-speak. My advice, as Slocum might have put it, is to tip Yip overboard.

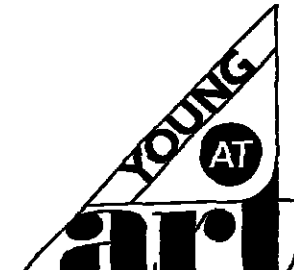
PETER BARNARD

Hilary Finch journeys to Wales to find a touring youth choir, run on a shoestring, that turns no voice away

are ruined choirs. First it was the dissolution of the monasteries, then the disintegration of the chapel. On the Welsh skyline they stand, defiantly broad-backed, without spire or steeple, monuments to a Bible-black century of religious and cultural nonconformity. Some gape into the wind, windows broken, doors swinging. Others house the latest in Welsh insulation art. And some few still sing.

A scarlet and green gallery, loud with young voices, sweeps round between the gilded Corinthian columns of the immaculately restored 1875 Tabernacle Chapel in Llanelli. Fifty years ago the adult choir of 180 would be visited by Dame Eva Turner, would take soprano Joan Hammond down the local coalmine, would be the first to hear Kathleen Ferrier's *Messiah*. Now the stained-glass grapes of Edom reverberate to the voices of 50 eight to 16-year-olds singing distinctly counter-reformatory repertoire: *Panis Angelicus*, *A Ceremony of Carols*, a Czech dance, *Maire's Wedding*, *The Mikado*, Johnny Bach.

In tune with the land of song



dral debate. Fifty faces stare forward, mesmerised by the hawk-like eyes of John Hywel Williams, a dark, bearded Svengali of the baton. At the piano, his wife Jean. Prowling up and down the mahogany aisles, son Jeremy, unofficial musical bouncer, valet, road manager and interpreter: half the choir speak Welsh as their first language.



Welsh songbirds: the Hywel Girls' Choir in full cry

joined the Hywel Girls' Choir six years ago; they retain two names, but sing as one mixed choir. There are still only ten boys out of 50 choristers, though. Strange, in this land of male-voice choirs? "Well," says Williams, "all of that's really more about a night out away from the wife. It was

traditionally difficult for the mother to leave home. Now, though, singing is not seen as enough of a male activity in Wales. Our boys don't want people to know they're in the choir, even if they'll sing their heads off at a rugby match." And those he keeps he loses when their voices break at 14.

So the search for membership continues. Nearly 3,000 choristers have passed through the choir since it was founded. It exists for all sorts and conditions, from hilltop detached to valleys terraced, from the so-called tone-deaf to the privately taught. Membership changes rapidly, and there is always a group of tiny, waistcoated probationers on hand to maintain momentum. There is no selection; Williams auditions only to discover if a child has a high or low voice, and no child is barred from touring through lack of finances — even though west Wales is not exactly a hotbed of corporate sponsorship.

With funding solely from raffles, collections, auctions and individual patrons, Williams finds commissioning new works impossible. Yet he needs them desperately. The search for repertoire is endless and often dispiriting. "Composers, particularly in Wales, are just not doing enough for young singers, for choirs with simple resources and yet a need for challenging music. If only the Urdd or the National Eisteddfod would commission music for young people." Britten, Gilbert and Sulli-

van, Richard Rodgers — and Johnny Bach — travelled with them to Moscow. Although most of the singers do not read music and learn entirely by ear, they rarely sing in fewer than four parts. In March they sold out the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire ("If we let agents organise our tours, we'd never get venues like that") and learnt a new work by the young Russian composer Georgi Struve, who flew in for the performance. Russian State Television and Radio, BBC1, S4C and BBC Radio Cymru were also in attendance. Now Williams wants to conquer China — or perhaps just Barbados first. Next year's plans remain open.

And competitors? "No. Full stop. We've never competed. We don't see the point. If you use an Eisteddfod for the fun of it, OK. But a cupboard full of cups never helped anyone," says the irrepressible Williams, whose own sideboard boasts a particularly large samovar. "We must develop our own listening, our own inner competition with other choirs with whom we meet and work all the time. And our own self-criticism."

Hywel Girls' Choir and Boy Singers, 6 Harries Avenue, Llanelli, Dyfed SA15 3LF. Tel/fax 01554 772979

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Bold traveller in a dry season

Imogen Stubbs on one woman's adventure with the Rabari nomads of Rajasthan

One of my most embarrassing memories is of meeting David Lean and gushing, "Mr Lean — I can't tell you how much I admire *Laurence of Olivier*." Without a flicker he replied, "Arabia. Yes. And what in particular do you admire?" "Oh — the camel bit." I yapped back hysterically. "You see, I've always been crazy about camels and deserts..." Fortunately I was dragged away before I could go on to describe how our lorry was covered with *National Geographic* photos — in pride of place, a lone woman crossing Australia by camel. I had always assumed I would become such an adventurer — then I discovered that I got panic attacks if I strayed outside a five-mile radius of Boots the Chemist.

So, instead, I turned to a vicarious way of seeing the world — travel writers — who, by recognising that to exist is to be perceived, give the rest of us wings to fly with.

I already knew something of Robyn Davidson's work, but *Desert Places* is by far the most remarkable odyssey in which I've had

DESERT PLACES
By Robyn Davidson
Viking, £18
ISBN 0 09 475540 7

covers incredible loneliness in companionship without a common language. Moreover, she is forced to realise that her need to communicate will always be with and via the culture that, in so many ways, she is attempting to disinherit. "Grey cranes lifted their trousers and stalked about in the water like English academics on some esoteric field trip."

Robyn Davidson first fell in love with the idea of travelling with the pastoral nomads in 1978, when she found herself in their midst at a camel fair in Pushkar. It was a romantic notion fuelled by visions of moonlit dunes, billowing robes the colour of sunsets, and a willingness "to surrender parts of what had originally formed me in exchange for the new perspectives offered by difference."

Her opportunity did not come until a decade later with a commission from *National Geographic*, but by then it had become a "moth-eaten vision" plagued by setbacks — mainly because of the grimly changing face of nomadism itself, changes due to a venal Government and the corrosive antagonism between the once symbiotic peripatetic and sedentary populations.

Eventually, in 1992, she managed to inculcate herself into a group in Gujarat. But instead of the unfettered independence of her dreams, she found herself encumbered with unwanted baggage and recalcitrant servants. The journey turns out to be "like reading *Tristram Shandy* —

endless digressions from where you thought you were going". And not romantic. "Pressed against me the women blew snot out of their noses, spat and belched. There were a couple of men under the tarpaulin with us shivering with fever. Baby goats covered in sores drank from our water-pots and urinated on our mats."

She sleeps among 5,000 sheep; sits on snakes; drinks guinea-worm infested water; attends a wedding and ends up babysitting the groom (aged four); she endures sickness, public ablations, theft and near murder. Worst of all, she suffers the "sub-continental stare" — where "eyes peeled my flesh away". Eventually a sort of masochism in the guise of "an over-developed sense of responsibility to the magazine's needs not being fulfilled" becomes anger at writing "another useless artifact for Western consumption to adorn doctors' waiting rooms".

She discovers "Dusare desh, dusare loog" (different countries, different people). Not only does this deprive her of longed-for solitude, but she discovers incredible loneliness in companionship without a common language. Moreover, she is forced to realise that her need to communicate will always be with and via the culture that, in so many ways, she is attempting to disinherit.

"Grey cranes lifted their trousers and stalked about in the water like English academics on some esoteric field trip."

Like the totemic beings of Aboriginal myth who wandered the continent in Dreamtime, she seems to be trying to sing everything that crosses her path into some interlinked meaning — the bewitching, soul-deceiving countryside, the magnanimous, rapacious nomads, and her own paradoxical self, enraged against India and yet "more in love with life than I had ever felt... Not for a moment did it allow relief from the discomforts of paradox. Not for a moment did it allow indifference."

But though language protects and recreates her experience, it also obscures and limits. However, by the end the writing gathers to some humble understanding that shines desparingly over the dirt and hunger and hurt of centuries — cocooning India into a place where the notion of country connotes utter belonging, where "being" eclipses "doing" and where tragedy and human greatness are somehow compatible.



A desert odyssey that reveals as much about the author as about the nomads she travelled with: Robyn Davidson (left) on the way to Jodhpur

A busy stage dominated by William the Great

Linda Colley

THE YOUNGER PITT
The Consuming Struggle

By John Ehrman
Constable, £35
ISBN 0 09 475540 X

It was January 23, 1806. The hushed, upper-class friends and doctors huddled around William Pitt the Younger's deathbed knew themselves to be watching history in the making, and heard him exit on a suitable line. "Oh, my country! How I leave my country," he groaned. And died. Yet the lower orders present heard differently. The nurse thought Pitt had asked for barley-water. Years later, the doorkeeper told Disraeli that the great man expired yearning for a pork pie. So what was the real, and what was the legend?

John Ehrman is now so much part of the latter that it comes as no surprise to find him backing the patriotic version. His biography of Pitt, of which this is the third and last volume, is one of the most remarkable sustained scholarly exercises of the 20th century: he has been researching it for more than 40 years, almost as long as his subject lived. The prose is lucid, keeping the momentum going, his mastery of detail is formidable, and reading his lengthy footnotes is a historical education in itself. But has he captured all of the man?

Part of the difficulty is that Ehrman has always sought "to show Pitt as a man moving among men on a busy stage". In the past, this strategy has sometimes led to Pitt being lost sight of in a dense narrative of events. Here, though, the balance is generally good, yet just listing what Ehrman has to cover shows the complexity of his task.

He starts in 1797 with Pitt in the midst of a banking crisis. He then describes his hero's introduction of the income tax in 1798, his conduct of the world war against Napoleon, his negotiation of the Act of Union with Ireland in 1800,

his responses to sedition, political infighting and anti-slavery debates at home, and to an expanding empire and two major invasion threats abroad. There is simply an awful lot to absorb.

There is also the problem of Pitt himself. He was a man of massive reserve and family pride. His father, the great

war-leader Chatham, had immersed him in politics and the classics from his infancy, calling him "the Young Senator". "William the Great".

Bearer of a famous name and trained for the premier-ship like no other, he climbed to the top of the greasy pole in 1783 in his 24th year. The price of staying there for some 20 years was that he knew he must never look down — or too much within. His father had been sporadically mad. Various uncles and aunts and his niece were also unbalanced. So he kept away — not just from the scrutiny of others but also from self-scrutiny, leaving the historian few clues about his innermost workings.



Pragmatic Cullshank drew Pitt as a weathercock in 1804

For such a man physical intimacy would have been difficult and probably repellent. Ehrman describes here his rapid retreat from the only woman whose name was ever seriously linked with his, Eleanor Eden. He also discusses whether Pitt enjoyed a homosexual relationship with his Cabinet colleague George Canning. He clearly always preferred the company of men, hard drinking, political gossip, exchanging Greek and Latin tags, furious horseback riding. But the evidence for much more than this is slight. Canning's hand resting on his shoulder in the Commons, a few ambiguous diary entries. Pitt was the only British Prime Minister ever to die a virgin.

But did he live or die a Tory? Ehrman is surely right to answer no. Pitt called himself a Whig. His personal commitment to the Anglican Church and to the monarchy was limited. He took a utilitarian view of traditional institutions, ruthlessly transforming them when necessary. In an ideal world, he thought that Tom Paine was right. He was conservative only in his conviction that an ideal world was unattainable and that property should be preserved. Only after his death was a renovated Tory party forged, with him as a crucial part of its mythology.

Ehrman probes the myths with caution and wisdom, but he does not entirely seek to escape them. He does not always face up to Pitt's ruthlessness. Nor does he examine what the mass of Britons — as distinct from the affluent — thought of him. Here are hundreds of thousands of words by a considerable historian. But not the last words.

High Hill

Jonathan Clark

LIBERTY AGAINST THE LAW
Some 17th-Century Controversies
By Christopher Hill
Allan Lane, £25
ISBN 0 7139 9119 4

have been wrong at times, espousing some hopeless cause or too-audacious hypothesis but stamping their image on the viewpoint of their age. Lesser historians, timid or inhibited, aimed at correctness: Hill had wider ends to serve. He has served that cause with more profound influence on his time than any of his peers. Among the English Marxist historians, that galaxy of talent from the 1960s, Hill was and is a prince of academe.

Hill was often wrong. He depicted the events of the 1640s and 1650s as a climacter-

ic afterwards, everything was different. The Civil War was a clash between the forces of progress and the forces of reaction: despite the Restoration, progress won in the end. The Civil War was a bourgeois revolution made by the bourgeoisie (early Hill), or, if not, at least a revolution from which the bourgeoisie profited (later Hill).

Yet, in retrospect, we appreciate that Hill's achievement was not in the imposition of rigid formulae but in an extraordinarily liberating diversification of scholarship: Hill's English revolution was the most effervescent of all the "great" revolutions, and the most populated by believable men and women expressing fascinating, if strange, ideas.

Now that Marxism can no longer harm, the point is not to refute Hill but to appreciate him. Every scrap of his writing is to be treasured: every essay, every review overflows with historical skill. Every

part of his work includes the whole.

This collection of studies focuses on crime, and crime seen from the viewpoint of the ordinary man as social protest. This thesis is not new: its classic formulation was by E. P. Thompson 20 years ago. Nor am I more persuaded now than I was then: it strikes me as an *Alice in Wonderland* vision in which all the criminals are victims and all their victims become criminals. I am not persuaded that "the landless" were "the lawless". Court records show that the poor are the chief victims of crime, however much Hill's literary sources romanticise criminals as Robin Hoods. Yet this hardly seems to matter beside the learning and deftness with which Hill makes his theme so fascinating.

Retirement evidently means nothing to a man with a vocation: Hill continues in full spate. Others might be more concerned. Only a few years ago, English universities could still boast of a race of giants among historians in post, Hill among them. Do they still?

Prose on the edge of an abyss

IS HUMAN suffering necessary? "Indispensable," replies Pangloss in Voltaire's *Candide*. The rationalist answer has not changed in the two and a half centuries since the Lisbon earthquake inspired Voltaire's lampoon of Leibniz. The same unchanging logic — of Robespierre, of Lenin and Mao, of every once and future leader of all progressive mankind — rules the macrocosm of *The Foundation Pit*.

Like *Candide*, Platonov's novel is a plotless allegory of human striving. But where Voltaire's characters roam the globe in pursuit of happiness, the heroes of Platonov's parody of social construction must stay put as they dig for theirs. With all the pathos inherent in their chain-gang immobility, they believe they are laying the foundations of paradise.

The Lisbon disaster killed 30,000 people. The forced industrialisation of Russia, which began in 1928 and is the historical background of *The Foundation Pit*, left an estimated 15.2 million dead. Even if one considers Platonov's masterpiece merely as a *conte philosophique*, one may note that his model universe was more amply observed than Voltaire's. He was also a writer — perhaps the only writer to have advanced Russian prose beyond what had been achieved by Chekhov — not a philosopher in literary disguise.

In Russia he had been recognised by generations of clandestine readers long before his works were published, nearly all of them posthumously. Yet a kind of triple moat now separates Platonov

Andrei Navrozov

THE FOUNDATION PIT

By Andrei Platonov
Harvill, £14.99
ISBN 1 85066 040 6

(1899-1951) from the English reader. One very modern pitfall is the commercialisation of Western literary culture, with its inflationary tendency to proclaim every book an enduring masterpiece. Inevitably, to claim for Platonov a pedigree of such peers as Voltaire and Chekhov is to compete with Jilly Cooper's blurb writers on unequal terms.

THE SECOND obstacle, much wider and deeper, is the optimistic rationalism which has distended Western thought since the 18th century. Panglossian leaders like Lenin may sometimes be derided, yet the rationalist malaise is deep in the bones of every educated European devoted to the principles of scientific and social progress. Deep down in every one of us is a little Lenin, and when Platonov holds up the looking glass where the monstrously logical conclusion of our enlightened beliefs is reflected, we would rather doubt his genius than acknowledge that it is ourselves that we see.

Platonov's genius is what keeps this fairy-tale mirror from cracking. His novel of 1929 is as much a miracle of language as a Wittgensteinian vision of the end of language. When men are reduced to the condition of dumb animals in the name of social progress, how do they behave? We may think we know the political answer from Orwell's nightmares. But how they communicate and reason we know only because Platonov has written *The Foundation Pit*.

It follows that the third obstacle before the reader of this, perhaps the greatest and certainly the last of the great Russian novels, is translation. The present version, by Robert Chandler and Geoffrey Smith, is inadequate and, if anything, a step backwards from the first English translation by Thomas Whitney of 20 years ago.

The difficulty here is not merely the arcane totalitarianism in which the novel is written. What is required of the translator is the ability to inflict untold suffering, as Platonov's heroes do every time they speak, on language itself.

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Violet wanted to talk with the boys

Woodrow Wyatt on the shrewd mind of Asquith's daughter

Born in 1887 into a Liberal family, but not liberal enough to let Violet Asquith have a real education at a real school as her brothers had, she made up for it by learning fast from the brilliant family she lived in — which entered an upper-class social circle, to the dismay of her father's old nonconformist friends. That was on the advent of Margot Tennant, daughter of Sir Charles Tennant Bt, and second wife of her father, H. H. Asquith. His was a middle-class family; his father was a nonconformist wool spinner and weaver in Lancashire. Helen, his first wife, was the daughter of a Manchester GP who died when her daughter, Violet, was four.

Asquith's ascent to 10 Downing Street demonstrates that talent in Britain has always led to the top if there is the will and the ambition. Sir Robert Peel was the son of an enlightened calico printing manufacturer; Ramsay MacDonald was the illegitimate son of a ploughman but became Prime Minister four times, eventually yielding to the temptations of what Lord Passfield called "the aristocratic embrace", as did Violet, her brothers and her father.

Violet was a prodigious diarist and correspondent. She began her diary when she was 17; the fascimile of the first page shows large, legible writing embellished by an exuberant flourish. This weighty book runs merely to 1914; more will follow, up to her death in 1967. Never can anyone have collected and kept so many letters written and received. The first volume contains fascinating flashes of elegant life and entertaining among elevated Liberals, habits of grand houses and ballrooms.

She adored her father and his second wife, whom she thought of as her mother. Violet is referring to Margot's father in the diary entry on her first ball: "Grandpapa's necklace made me feel like a dowager." Roy Jenkins wrote a sympathetic and gripping biography of H. H. Asquith; he is comfortable with Liberals who glide serenely into public esteem. In his introduction to *Lantern Slides*, however, the time bomb, which nearly went off in his account of Asquith's private as well as public life, explodes. Violet read the manuscript of his book; Roy saw her afterwards. She protested too much in her reaction, furious at the suggestion that Venetia Stanley, one of her close friends, had a more than friendly relationship with her father. "It cannot be true. Venetia was so plain."

The photograph of Venetia and contemporary comment prove the opposite. In his book Roy Jenkins refers to Asquith's "great prime-ministerial infat-

LANTERN SLIDES
The Diaries and
Letters of Violet
Bonham-Carter,
1904-1914

Edited by Mark Bonham-Carter and Mark Pottle
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20
ISBN 0 297 81649 7

uation and epistolary romance (and maybe more) with a young woman called Venetia Stanley". For a while Venetia was besotted and it strains credulity to believe that their mutual love was never carnal. But as young girls grow older they often begin to prefer younger, less distinguished, men: poor Asquith suffered the agony of a jilted youth as gradually she lobbied him off.

When Violet was 18 she disposed of a young man in a more forthright manner. "Do you suppose I don't realise that you've said this dozens of times before to dozens of



Violet, as a girl, with her father

different people? Do you suppose you are pleasing me? If so you must think very very poorly of women in general and me in particular. I delight in you when you are talking to the boys but when you're with me I can't stand you." She is observant and shrewd, save when overcome by bursting love which prompts her to gush embarrassingly. Notwithstanding, there are hints of a political mind developing. She was instantly attracted by the young Winston Churchill who enjoyed talking to her on political issues as an equal. Their close relationship survived his marriage to Clementine, about whose engagement to Winston she wrote to Venetia Stanley: "I had a very ecstatic letter from Clemmy saying all the suitable things. I wonder how stupid Winston thinks her."

This is a book to be dipped into, not to be read chronologically. There is charm and freshness dotted around throughout. But it would have been more pleasurable and instructive if there had been considerable pruning, cutting out half the pages. If this were done in the next volume I think it would reach a wider audience, particularly as it might be cheaper as well. One may not read all of *Lantern Slides*, but chunks of it are very satisfying.

Roger Scruton on a doctor's embrace of euthanasia: what are the implications of a licence to kill?

Modern medicine has brought relief and suffering in equal measure. While we are young and sturdy, it arms us against disease, nurses our injuries, and soothes our pains. When health begins to fail, however, it brings pain, loneliness and humiliation, as the futile battle with our common fate is fought and lost in every corner of the body.

The Dutch have devised a solution to this problem — legalised euthanasia. Dutch doctors now have the right to administer the kiss of death, on condition that the patient is terminally ill and consents to his own extinction. (But is that something that you can really consent to? Can you consent to that which removes the possibility of consent?) *Dancing with Mr D* tells the story of this new medical vocation.

Dr Keizer works in a hospice for the terminally ill. He is a lapsed Roman Catholic, whose remembered faith gives poignancy to his tales of dying. He sees his patients as people who were promised eternal life, and who may or may not know that the promise will never be honoured. Keizer also has a degree in philosophy from Nottingham University, quotes frequently from Wittgenstein, and shores up his scepticism with familiar arguments.

Convinced that life is all we have, and that nothing lies beyond the grave save infinite nothingness, Keizer takes comfort in the fact that there is nevertheless something that he, as a doctor, can give the dying, namely death. Yet he loves life, is fascinated by his fellow human beings, and has an eye for character and drama. It is a commonplace that death comes to all of us, and that we are equal at the last. But Keizer

Not mighty but mundane



Keizer's confrontation with mortality has older echoes: 18th-century engraving of the Dance of Death

shows that we are not equal at all — that there are as many ways of dying as there are kinds of human character.

Keizer's patients come from all walks of life, and bring to their last encounter contrasting stores of wisdom, emotion and memory. Keizer writes of their ends with wit and style. But the most remarkable feature of his book is the moral integrity of the writer, and the unforced good nature which causes him to respect the dignity of every patient, however troublesome, and however decayed.

DANCING WITH MR D

By Bert Keizer

Doubleday, £9.99

ISBN 0 385 40988 X

Respecting another's dignity does not mean deferring to him. The dignity of a criminal is respected by punishing him; the dignity of the selfish and the irresponsible is respected by reproving them. Dr Keizer pursues the more despicable of his charges to the very end with

his indignation; towards others he responds with an affectionate simplicity that is all the more remarkable in view of his professional stance of deep disillusion.

"It seems so rude to stare at a dead person, they can't stare back." "A dying person doesn't wrestle with death as Proust says, but with a cease in the sheets that makes him uncomfortable..." That is Keizer's style: frank, funny and scattered with epigrams. His descriptions of diseases express a sense that he too might at any moment fall victim to them; he searches his patients for the

knowledge of what it will be like when a cerebral haemorrhage plunges him into darkness.

His vignettes of the dying are therefore also anticipations, a kind of diary of possible worlds, juxtaposed with amusing and ironical portraits of Jaarsma, his fellow doctor, and Mieke, the rough and ready nurse. Death, for Dr Keizer, is an inexhaustible topic of thought and conversation, all the more fascinating in that nothing can be said about it — for, in Wittgenstein's words, "death is not an event in life... our life has no end just in the way that our visual field has no limits".

All this is sufficiently interesting to recommend Keizer's book, as a kind of secular *ars moriendi*. Yet more interesting, however, are the front-line reports from the field of euthanasia. Keizer gives an extraordinary account of the ease with which Dutch doctors can obtain a licence to kill, of the matter-of-fact way in which the fatal dose is administered (there being no other way that could make euthanasia seem like a medical procedure), and of the frequently blasé approach of the relatives.

Keizer's meticulous cultivation of friendship towards his patients may be a way of compensating for the fact that he is not the opponent but the accomplice of their death. At any rate, it is difficult to read his eerie stories without qualms. If all doctors were as conscientious and as troubled as Dr Keizer, you could trust them to manage your death to your own satisfaction. But, given human nature, it is more likely to be managed to the satisfaction of your nearest and dearest. And as euthanasia spread, your nearest and dearest will be less and less near, and less and less dear.

What happened after the lady vanished

In the spring of 1937, Amelia Earhart set off with her navigator, Fred Noonan, to fly around the world. The flight was to have been the culmination of a remarkable career. Earhart was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic; the first person to fly alone from Honolulu to California. Her exploits, as well as her pixie face and mannish style, made her an icon of American daring-do: she was Kate Hepburn for real.

But Earhart and Noonan's plane vanished. Her disappearance was haunting, and the possibility of her survival hung in the national consciousness. This fine first novel gives Earhart's ghost a voice.

Jane Mendelsohn, a New Yorker, takes up where the facts leave off: the flyer and her drunken navigator land, intact, on a remote Pacific island. They were lost: the crash is Noonan's fault, he shouldn't have been drinking. They could not make contact with any other plane or ship: the crash is Earhart's fault, she wouldn't carry a heavy trailing wire for their radio. The story journeys from blame, through desperation and recollection and into love. Slipping between the first and third person, between present and past, Mendelsohn makes her fictional Amelia Earhart a poignant synthesis of myth and humanity.

That it is not an original premise to put characters on a desert island in order to isolate

Erica Wagner

I WAS AMELIA
EARHART

By Jane Mendelsohn

Cape, £9.99

ISBN 0 224 04346 6

of her personality, is still on a reef flat: she is forced to find inside of her another, earth-bound Amelia. Mendelsohn is not afraid of labelling and symbol: she allows the electricity between her two characters to build until it is released in a storm of lightning and rain that drives them apart and then finally together. They let go of everything except each other. "The way of life is wonderful," she remembered. It is by abandonment."

Heroines die young. Mendelsohn's Earhart abandons her heroine self for a life that even she cannot destroy, despite a last, reckless flight in her beloved Electra. The writing is enraptured by the



Myth brought to life: Earhart, on the eve of her attempted flight around the world, with her Lockheed Electra (1937)

wonder of flight in a way that seems to belong to an earlier age — of Lindbergh or St-Exupéry — but is also immediately, insistently physical: "Her metal skeleton scrapes the atmosphere which seems to rupture as she passes, sucking her through again and again." Jane Mendelsohn has disentangled

the woman from the machine, the heroine from the human, and created an original and compelling romance of love and flight. The story was incredible to her, and for a moment it seemed as if everyone's story was fictional, as if all that was real were the bystanders, the people who told and retold the stories, not the characters themselves."

The father of revolutions

Jonathan Spence's enthralling biography of the cult leader who initiated the bloodiest civil war in human history both enhances our understanding of a key period in modern China's evolution and helps to explain why the country's rulers are so alarmed by signs that similar cultists are finding increasingly receptive audiences among Chinese peasants today.

In the mid-19th century, Hong Xiquan, who called himself the younger brother of Jesus Christ, launched a peasant revolt against the decaying Ching Dynasty. Within a couple of years, the once impoverished schoolteacher had gained control of a vast area of eastern China extending some 350 miles from north to south and a similar distance east to west. This he called his Heavenly Kingdom, with its Heavenly Capital in Nanking. By the time the uprising was finally crushed in 1864 some 20 million people had died. During his 11 years as Heavenly King in Nanking, however, Hong had established a model for peasant rebellion that was studied and admired by later revolutionaries whose names are better known in the West than that of God's Chinese son, most notably Sun Yat-sen and Mao Tse-tung.

With the storyteller's art that has made him one of the best-known contemporary Chinese historians, Spence

describes the milieu in which Hong developed his often bizarre-sounding religious ideas. It was a China that was reluctantly beginning to open doors to the outside world after its defeat in the Opium War with Britain. With the foreign traders came missionaries who, much to the disapproval of the Ching Government, translated their Christian texts into Chinese and distributed them widely.

Hong, disappointed by his repeated failure to pass the examinations for the civil service, found inspiration in the foreigners' message. What he read convinced him that a vivid dream he had had while ill was in fact an encounter with God.

Spence does not attempt to draw parallels between the growth of the Taiping movement and the resurgence in today's China of millenarian sects, some of which draw on a similar mix of Christianity and folk religion. But the reader should bear in mind that there is much in Hong's attitude to the world around him and his dreams of divine grandeur that is strikingly familiar in the countryside of China under Deng Xiaoping. In January this year, a Chinese firing squad executed

Wu Yang-ming, the leader of a millenarian sect which operated clandestinely in much the same area as that once controlled by the Taipings. Wu claimed to be Jesus Christ and told his followers that he could save them from apocalyptic destruction, which he said would occur in the year 2000. His sect allegedly called for the overthrow of the Communist Party and the establishment of a new country with Wu as emperor.

The Chinese authorities called Wu's sect, which founded numerous cells in rural eastern China and had followers in several big cities around the country, the biggest group of "counter-revolutionary hoodlums" uncovered in China since the founding of the communist state in 1949. They accused Wu of rapping many of his female followers, as well as of "heresy".

To the authorities in Peking, reports of millenarian cult activity in the countryside are more than just the intriguing sideshows that they often seem to Western readers. The Taiping Rebellion may have inspired China's communist leaders in their revolutionary days, but now it haunts them. Official journals admit that party organisation is crum-

bling in the countryside as religious and clan forces grow rapidly in strength.

As the Peking magazine *Pursuit of Truth* put it recently, "some peasants who are party members have put the party's regulations at the back of their minds and have completely forgotten the pledges they made when they joined. Now they show utter devotion to religion and superstition."

The article ascribed this phenomenon to the "ideological confusion" caused by reform. Hong's Taipings flourished in the mid-19th century in an empire drained of its strength by corruption, where secret societies and bandit gangs controlled much of the countryside. Communist China today is still far more orderly than it was under the late Ching Dynasty, but the seeds of unrest are spreading as crime soars, corruption becomes ever more rampant, and millions of peasants roam the country in search of work. Spence's book helps us to understand how a seemingly odd-ball visionary can help such seeds to grow.

James Miles is the Hong Kong correspondent for the BBC World Service. His book, *The Legacy of Tiananmen: China in Disarray*, is published by The University of Michigan Press

Refuge from the troubles at home

TALES of the white man in Africa have prodded humanity for some time now. For this third novel, *Stone Kingdoms* (Phoenix House, £14.99, ISBN 1 897580 33 9), David Park has updated the genre, exporting earlier themes of trauma and reconciliation in Northern Ireland to a Rwanda-style regime. His narrator, Naomi, is a teacher, and her escape from the Troubles as an aid worker presents a blacker, less optimistic view of good intentions.

Naomi is complex enough for a start. The red-haired daughter of a Northern Irish Protestant minister, she has grown up in Donegal, an Ulster county which is part of the Republic. Her Orangeman father keeps her apart from the natives. Every summer he sets off to march in bowler hat and sash, displaying the same grim determination with which he swims in the Atlantic throughout the year. When he eventually abandons the struggle and allows himself to be swept away by the tide, the metaphors are inescapable.

His wife, too, is more emblematic than real. Her bemused smile at male obsession is presented as noble, but grates when replicated in her modern, university-educated daughter. Yet for all her sensitivity, Naomi is a product of the Me Generation.

She seems conscienceless when her presence in a deserted relief camp causes bloodshed; there is no breast-beating when she runs away with a woman refugee, abandoning her lover's dependent family to their fate.

Yet for all such contradictions, this is a rich and deeply thoughtful book. Park writes prose like a poet; and the invisible lines of national borders and tribal territory are etched into a text which rolls freely through time and place. Most strikingly, no matter how far these characters travel, television has gone before. The question most repeated is "Why did you come here?" The traditional white man's answer implicitly remains, "To find myself." Certainly, Naomi's experiences confer personal freedoms. But her argument that the blundering relief agencies should pull out and leave the warring factions to work things out for themselves is never properly presented. Ironically, such a solution looks even more difficult when applied closer to home. Despite Park's sincere belief in the power of love, it is an adventure on which few inhabitants of his own Six Counties would be prepared to embark.

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Killing is funny, if that's your sort of thing

Ian Paterson, creator of *Rab C Nesbitt* and guardian of Glaswegian gallows humour, got his due-paying out of the way right at the beginning of *Bad Boys* (BBC1) last night. We began with two thickly-accented thugs discussing Quentin Tarantino as they took their revolvers out of a car boot.

Please, I thought, not another play on the Big Mac scene from *Pulp Fiction* — everybody's done that. And now Paterson has done it too. In France, they don't call a Big Mac *le Mac*, explained the thug who had been on a special pilgrimage to Dieppe to find out, they call it *un Big Mac*. "You wouldn't go in to Jimmy's fish emporium and ask for the fish supper, would you. Not unless you were *un nuptique*." Hrm, as Big Mac variations go, not bad.

The tribute to the American film director, however, was about more than hamburgers. It is Tarantino

who has posited that extreme violence can be funny and it is on that arguable premise that *Bad Boys* stands. To make the debt doubly clear, Paterson endowed gangland boss Malky Mulherron (Alex Norton) with the sort of haircut that would give even John Travolta nightmares.

The problem is that only some people find *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction* funny. Others find Tarantino's comic celebration of murder and mutilation perfectly ghastly and I am sure that some of them will object to *Bad Boys* for similar reasons. Torture, hammer fights, compulsory amputations: certainly not standard comic fare.

But the worst the series is guilty of is bad, no appalling, timing. Surely, it is too early for anybody — and particularly the BBC — to find the sound of suburban Scottish streets echoing to the sound of gunfire funny. How vociferous is any minority which objects to lines

such as "mindless violence, it's brilliant, it gives you back your self-respect", we will discover in due course. But I suspect that by the time the fuss blows over, it will be too late. *Bad Boys* will be a great popular success.

It may trample through the taboos, but Paterson's script is beautifully crafted, delivered with considerable style by a well-chosen cast, and is very funny. And by the simple device of placing Glasgow gangland under threat from villainous Londoners, Paterson has ensured that *Bad Boys* should have a wider appeal than the linguistically challenging *Rab C Nesbitt*. Most of us should understand at least half the lines.

Should a defence be needed, the BBC will also be able to point out that the violence is implicit and very stylised. In an episode that included a shoot-out and calling the Nishills gang out



Matthew Bond

of retirement for an old-fashioned street fight (mayhem's different now, it's all high-tech) nobody was killed and scarcely a drop of blood was shed. It is clearly make-believe and we are supposed to be grown-ups... The fact remains, however, that even for black comedy, timing is everything.

More taboos tumbled last night in the unlikely venue of Drapers' Hall in the City of London.

Magnus Magnusson said the word "bleep". "Oooh," we all went, making a mental note to make Mastermind (BBC1) an essential part of every Wednesday night. At least that is what the Mastermind producer would have liked us to have thought.

Instead, I sat there thinking that "The Sex Pistols and Punk Rock" hardly counted as a specialist subject, especially if you were young enough/old enough to have lived through it. But, helped by one point from Magnusson's stumble-free question "which band member reportedly conceived the title *New Mind the Bleep?*", Alan Whittaker (an unrepentant, er, chap from Penzance) stormed to victory. Shame; I was rooting for the Gambian-born advice worker who announced his specialist subject as "the life and philosophy of the old master himself, Karl Marx" — author, of course, of *New Mind the Capital*.

The educational process continued on BBC2 in *Secrets of Lost Empires*, where we were taught two important lessons. The first was how prehistoric man (and I dare say prehistoric woman too) might have built Stonehenge. The second was why they should never have invited an American stonemason along to watch.

Now, it is true that some of the methods being tried by Mark Whitty, a British engineer, were perhaps a little elaborate for our stone-tooled forebears. But that still did not excuse Roger Hopkins' behaviour: "Remind me to get you the Boy Scout manual," he sneered, as two huge wooden levers struggled to control a 40-tonne, not-quite-standing stone. Whitty tried again. "I hope you've built a decent A-frame this time," said Hopkins, digging himself in deeper than the heelstone. Whitty persevered and, no

doubt encouraged by the thought of the first human sacrifice under a trilithon (two standing stones plus a lintel) for 3,000 years, triumphed. Next week, we tell them how to do Mount Rushmore.

Not everything that comes out of America is bad, of course, and one of the best in recent months has been the second series of *ER* (Channel 4). Last night, it came to an end — which at least means that some of us will be able to go out on Wednesday night again.

Carter finally became a doctor. Weaver became something called an attending and Ross and Greene signalled they would be back for the sadly far-off series three with lots of buddy stuff. But in the finest tradition, uncertainty — HIV, professional discontent, mental disintegration — hung over just about everybody else. American stonemasons I can live without, but American drama of this quality — never.

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (56092)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (CeeFax) (87363)
- 9.00 Breakfast News Extra (CeeFax) (705352) 9.30am Can't Cook Won't Cook (CeeFax) (708410)
- 9.50 FILM: *Awake At Last* (1956). Jeff Chandler, George Nader and Julie Adams in a Second World War drama. Directed by George Feeny. Includes 11.00 News and weather (93405878)
- 12.00 News (CeeFax) and weather (1383566)
- 12.05pm Call My Bluff. With Bob Holness, Sandi Toksvig and Times columnist Alan Coren (s) (552498) 12.35 Going for Gold (s) (4415818)
- 1.00 News (CeeFax) and weather (80450) 1.30 Regional News (CeeFax) (8225052) 1.40 Newsnight (CeeFax) (s) (8672305) 2.00 The Flying Doctors (CeeFax) (s) (74068)
- 3.30 Playdays (CeeFax) (2042837) 3.50 Greedy-saurus and the Gang (CeeFax) (8464653) 3.55 Peter Pan and the Pirates (CeeFax) (s) (2054672) 4.15 The Wizard of Oz (CeeFax) (s) (8396189) 4.35 Mud (CeeFax) (s) (2331382) 4.50 Newsworld (CeeFax) (70214) 5.10 The Ant and the Aardvark (CeeFax) (s) (8352721)
- 5.35 Neighbours (CeeFax) (s) (827818)
- 6.00 News (CeeFax) and weather (288)
- 6.30 Regional News Magazines (951)
- 7.00 Top of the Pops (CeeFax) (s) (4768)
- 7.30 EastEnders. Grant pays Ruth a visit (CeeFax) (s) (295)
- 8.00 Animal Hospital: On the hoof. Prof Harris swaps domestic pets for the more exotic wildlife of Wiltshire's Wild Animal Park in Bedfordshire (CeeFax) (2419)
- 8.30 Airport. (5/6) Documentary series behind the scenes at Heathrow, the world's busiest international airport (CeeFax) (2824)
- 9.00 News (CeeFax); regional news and weather (5604)
- 9.30 Absolutely Fabulous. Award-winning comedy with Jennifer Saunders and Joanna Lumley (CeeFax) (s) (95295)
- 10.00 Making Babies. Anna arrives at the hospital for the scan. Will her second attempt at IVF be successful? Tanja begins to bleed again and is rushed into hospital. Rebecca arrives at the clinic after an all-clear from her cancer scan and an unexpected honour is conferred on Professor Robert Winston. Last in series (CeeFax) (s) (110491) NL: 10.00 Spotlight 10.30 Making Babies 11.30 Question Time 12.25 FILM: Play It Again Sam 1.45 Weather
- 10.50 Question Time. On the panel are the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, William Waldegrave and Labour's legal affairs spokesman, Peter Burt (CeeFax) (253127) WALES: 10.50 The Sift 11.30 Question Time 12.35 FILM: Play It Again Sam 1.55 News and weather
- 11.55 FILM: *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946). Comedy starring Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed. An insecure film critic calls on the spirit of Humphrey Bogart for advice on how to treat women. Directed by Frank Capra (CeeFax) (415030)
- 1.15am Weather (9685144)

- BBC2**
- 6.00am Open University: Stressed Materials (7655856) 6.25 Relational Concepts (7634363) 6.50 Free Body Diagrams (5667856)
- 7.15 See Hear Hear (BBC2) (4055924)
- 7.30 Brum (9214180) 7.40 Blinky Bill (4299905) 8.05 Smurfs' Adventures (7705301) 8.30 Blue Peter (74214) 9.00 Mighty Max (4988837) 9.20 Activ-8 (7071498) 9.45 SuperTed (3067295) 9.55 Spot (2613582) 10.00 Playdays (2630358) 10.20 Star Trek (2441106) 10.50 The Tick (1998163) 11.10 Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased) (4535853) 12.00 Great Crimes and Trials of the 20th Century (78030)
- 12.30pm Working Lunch (18671)
- 1.00 Brum (CeeFax) (s) (40923127)
- 1.10 The Season: Henley Week (CeeFax) (s) (31799127)
- 1.40 All Washed Out. Why the Yorkshire Dales flooded in 1995 (CeeFax) (39064740)
- 2.10 The Andrew Neil Show (CeeFax) (7567278)
- 3.00 News & Weather (7310092)
- 3.05 The Natural World. North York Moors National Park (9692301)
- 3.55 News (CeeFax) and weather (8461568) 4.00 Today's Day (CeeFax) (s) (924) 4.30 Ready, Steady, Cook (CeeFax) (s) (108) 5.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (4900509) 5.40 The Sky at Night (CeeFax) (s) (172943)
- 6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (901045) 6.45 The O Zone (CeeFax) (s) (888740)
- 7.00 Best of Esther (CeeFax) (s) (5011) WALES: Cantic
- 7.30 Out and About (837) NL: 7.30 We Are Not Amused (837) WALES: 7.30 Homeland (837)
- 8.00 Rick Stein's Taste of the Sea (CeeFax) (s) (1059)

CHOICE

One Foot in the Past (BBC2, 8.30pm)

The Channel Tunnel rail link is threatening the Victorian gasometers which dominate the skyline outside Kings Cross station. But *One Foot in the Past* is back to mount a rescue campaign. Even the locals sing the aesthetic praises of structures usually regarded as a redundant eyesore, while conservationists are positively lyrical about them. After this you wonder whether the builders of the rail link will dare to go ahead. Also on the unflinching heritage programme, Jack Charlton takes us to one of many castles in his native Northumberland and tells memories of his mother, who died recently. Finally there is an item on how members of the Royal Family have tried to ensure privacy in their bedchambers, a problem which has troubled the monarchy since the arrival of tabloid newspapers.

SAS: The Soldiers' Story (ITV, 9.00pm)

The storming of the Iranian Embassy in London in 1980 provided television with some of its most gripping live coverage. But the freeing of the hostages held by Iraqi terrorists had to be observed from outside. We heard the gunfire and saw the smoke but only later was the outcome of the SAS mission confirmed. Now, to launch a series about the SAS, we get the inside story in a mixture of news footage and reconstruction, vividly assembled by the director Andrew Fiddington. Some of the original participants take part. Preserving the integrity of a semi-secret service, the identities are concealed but the testimonies are revealing. "It was the law of the jungle — kill or be killed," says one black-headed figure, and admiration for the efficiency of the operation may be tempered by the gung-ho relish with which it was conducted.

HTV

6.00am GMTV (9717158) 9.25 Supermarket Sweep (CeeFax) (s) (7058547)

9.55 Regional News (Teletext) (2615108)

10.00 The Time... the Place (s) (690568)

10.35 This Morning (50382478)

12.20pm Regional News (Teletext) (1372450)

12.30 News and weather (Teletext) (4034943)

12.55 Shortland Street (CeeFax) (4019634) 1.25 Coronation Street (CeeFax) (1335585) 2.00 Home and Away (Teletext) (s) (1923301)

2.25 FILM: *Too Good to Be True* (1989). Conclusion of yesterday's film about jealousy which ends in murder. Directed by Christian I. Nyby II (7573837)

3.20 News (Teletext) (7327382)

3.25 Regional News (Teletext) (7326653)

3.30 The Riddlers (CeeFax) (s) (5092635) 3.40 Wilfred (CeeFax) (s) (174634) 3.50 Twinkl the Dream Being (CeeFax) (s) (459721) 3.55 Rupert (CeeFax) (s) (2030092) 4.20 Samson Superslug (Teletext) (s) (5395450) 4.45 Crazy Cottage (Teletext) (s) (222634)

5.10 A Country Practice (9292295)

5.40 News and weather (Teletext) (176769)

6.00 Home and Away (CeeFax) (s) (61363)

6.25 HTV News (Teletext) (674276)

7.00 Emmerdale (Teletext) (9637)

7.30 3-D. Julia Somerville looks at how the shape of models has changed in the last few years. Where, once a female had to be incredibly thin, now the curvaceous look is more popular, while for men the traditionally attractive model is losing out to the male wall (CeeFax) (363)

8.00 The Bill. Datta and Garfield investigate a case of suspected drug dealing (CeeFax) (565)

8.30 Police, Camera, Action! Alastair Stewart presents footage of motorists taking life-threatening risks (CeeFax) (s) (7092)

HTV WALES

As HTV West except:

6.25pm-7.00 Wales Tonight (874276)

7.30-8.00 Udd 96. Elton Jones reports from the Udd National Estate (363)

10.40 Welsh & Wealthy (739856)

11.10 Hunter (919030)

12.10am 3-D (4285238)

As HTV West except:

12.55 Emmerdale (4019634)

1.25-1.55 Cross Wits (3172637)

1.55 Home and Away (3067450)

2.25 Entertainment Today (19203498)

2.55-3.20 A Country Practice (6060382)

5.10-5.40 Home and Away (9292295)

6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (65818)

10.30 Westcountry News (923768)

10.45 Top Guns (853160)

11.15 Millions (833301)

11.45 Prisoner Call Block H (564978)

As HTV West except:

12.55 Home and Away (4019634)

1.25 Cross Wits (3172637)

1.55 A Country Practice (69737108)

2.20 Entertainment Today (19204127)

2.50-3.20 Surprise Chef (2826127)

5.10 Home and Away (9292295)

5.37-5.40 Three Minutes — Crimestoppers (351924)

6.30-7.00 Grass Roots (479)

10.40 Film: Blue Thunder (88234419)

12.00am Phoenix (9135967)

5.00 FreeScreen (46877)

Wales

6.35am The Adventures of T-Rex (CeeFax) (5671059)

7.00 The Big Breakfast (25841)

9.00 Saved by the Bell: The College Years (CeeFax) (709030) 9.25 The Pink Panther Show (CeeFax) (s) (7058337) 9.50 California Dreams (CeeFax) (s) (695127) 10.20 Gamesmaster (CeeFax) (s) (6237905) 10.45 Mork and Mindy (CeeFax) (s) (3206653) 11.15 Wildlife (CeeFax) (s) (4624001) 12.05pm The Adventures of Tintin (CeeFax) (s) (774363) 3.30 Seamus Street (CeeFax) (s) (92214) 1.30 Hallelujah followed by Alfie Atkins (90740) 2.00 The Lineamen (15158160)

2.15 Australia Wild (Teletext) (19281276)

2.40 FILM: *Another Dawn* (1937, b/w). A romantic adventure starring Errol Flynn and Kay Francis. Directed by William Dieterle. (Teletext) (2742653)

4.00 The Lost Waterway (CeeFax) (s) (432) 4.30 Fifteen to One (Teletext) (s) (278) 5.00 Rick Lake (Teletext) (s) (1381855)

5.45 Terrytoons. Followed by Muriel Bush, starstruck (440656)

6.00 NBA 24/7. James Belushi talks about his favourite team — the Chicago Bulls (769)

6.30 Roseanne. DJ is not doing well at school and Roseanne asks DJ to find out the reason (CeeFax) (s) (721)

7.00 Channel 4 News (Teletext) (278905)

7.50 The Slot (234363)

8.00 Wild Britain: The Quick Brown Fox. The life cycle of foxes through the seasons (Teletext) (6127)

8.30 Home to Roost. Comedy series starring John Thaw as a divorced father who has his son living with him. Matthew (Fleese Dinsdale) brings home a girlfriend and it is a father's first instinct to object to everything about her (Teletext) (5634)



Kirsty Wark and gasholders (8.30pm)

- 8.30 **One Foot in the Past**. New series of the heritage programme (7586)
- 9.00 **The Travel Show**. Arthur Smith visits Wensleydale; Simon Calder reports from northern Cyprus; and Sophie Campbell is in Copenhagen (CeeFax) (s) (8566)
- 9.30 **The Poisoned Chalice**. Concluding the series about Britain's relationship with continental Europe in this century (CeeFax) (144295)
- 10.20 **Close Up**. Actor Brian Cox chooses a favourite scene *Three Colours: Blue* (CeeFax) (s) (370805)
- 10.30 **Newsnight**. With Kirsty Wark (791547)
- 11.15 **Gaytime**. TV. Entertainment show by and for lesbians and gays (CeeFax) (s) (309740)
- 12.00 **Picture This: Postcards to My Brother**. With Tony Major-Bell (CeeFax) (s) (89431)
- 12.30am-6.00 **The Learning Zone** (7382)

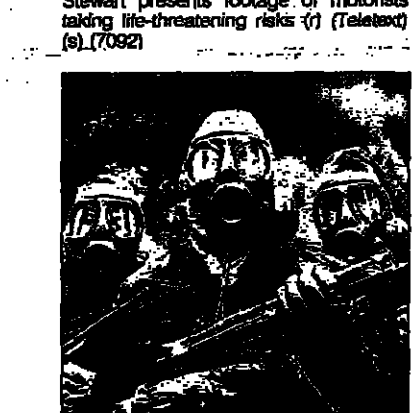
Witness: When Women Kill (Channel 4, 9.00pm)

A documentary from Canada features three women who filed their violent husbands' testimonies. Delivered straight to camera with no mediating commentary, are as grimly matter-of-fact as they are shocking. They tell of final, usually spur-of-the-moment, retaliation after enduring years of beating and abuse. The film raises wider questions about the shortcomings of the legal system in dealing with such cases. In particular the failure to tackle the male violence which lies at their root. Montages of newspaper cuttings and clips from television news reports underline the extent of the problem, even in supposedly civilized Canada. Insights into why men are violent towards women are given by members of a batterers' therapy group in Ontario.

The Poisoned Chalice: Nemesis (BBC2, 9.30pm)

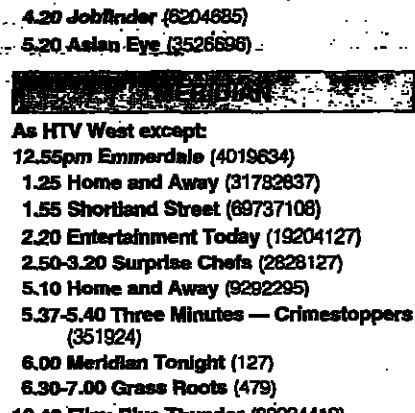
The final instalment of a pulsating series charts Britain's testy relationship with the European Community and has seen last-minute script changes to include John Major's "beef offensive" and the Government policy of non-cooperation. Setting the tone is footage of the continental European in the 1980s at which Mrs Thatcher humiliated the EU President, Jacques Delors. Her aggressive style horrified even members of her own Cabinet, as Lords Howe and Lawson and Douglas Hurd testified. Chancellor Kohl once tried to woo Mrs Thatcher with a cloyingly dish, a stuffed pig's stomach, proved no more palatable to her than the social chapter. Europe helped to topple Mrs Thatcher and has plagued her successor.

Peter Waymark



The elite Special Air Service (9.00pm)

- 9.00 **S.A.S. — the Soldiers' Story**. Documentary series (Teletext) (s) (3363)
- 10.00 News and weather (Teletext) (73585)
- 10.30 Regional News (Teletext) (909189)
- 10.40 On the Line. Live discussion on one of the week's big stories (739856)
- 11.10 FILM: *Curiously Killing* (1990) starring Rae Dawn Chong, Courteney Cox and C. Thomas Howell. A struggling artist travels a murder when his neighbor supposedly commits suicide. Directed by Colin Bucksey (833178)
- 12.40 **Carnal Knowledge (9135967) 1.40 **Not Fade Away** (1525783) 2.40 **Shift** (161290) 3.35 **Late & Loud** (CeeFax) (s) (1508219) 4.30 **The Time... the Place** (CeeFax) (s) (94702) 5.00 **Garden Calendar** (46677)**
- 5.30 Morning News (64986)



The author Ann Jones (9.00pm)

- Witness: When Women Kill** (Channel 4, 9.00pm)
- 9.00 **NYPD Blue**. New York police drama series. While one suspect admits murdering his aunt, Medavoy and Martinez hunt for a biker suspected of killing a huncher (Teletext) (755585)
- 10.55 **Whose Line Is It Anyway?** Off-the-cuff comedy chaired by Cleve Anderson (CeeFax) (s) (58160)
- 11.30 **Rory Bremner — Who Else?** A repeat of last Friday's final edition of the comedy satire show (s) (834011)
- 12.10am **The Year Life**. Andrew Neil talks to Olivia Newton John (CeeFax) (s) (906580)
- 12.55 **Dispatches** (CeeFax) (5219180)
- 1.40 FILM: *Life Begins in College* (1937, b/w) with the Fitz Brothers, Joan Davis and Tony Martin. A college comedy musical about campus fellows who are eager to become involved in college football. Directed by William A. Seiter (633944)

Video Plus+ and the Video PlusCodes

The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes — numbers which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a Video PlusCode. For more information on the programme you wish to record, Video Plus+ (V), Pluscode (P), and Video PlusCodes are trademarks of Genetec Development Ltd.

SKY NEWS

For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see the Vision supplement, published Saturday

SKY ONE

7.00am Open (94719) 8.00am News Connection (918030) 9.40 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 10.40 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 11.10 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 11.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 12.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 12.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 1.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 1.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 1.55 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 2.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 2.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 3.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 3.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 4.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 4.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 5.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 5.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 6.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 6.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 7.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 7.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 8.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 8.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 9.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (954030) 10.00 The Oprah 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GOLF 42

DAVIES WILL ADOPT
CAUTIOUS APPROACH
AT US OPEN

SPORT

THURSDAY MAY 30 1996

ATHLETICS 46

LEWIS SEEKS TO
MAKE LEAP INTO
THOMPSON'S LEAGUE

Double talk and delay reflect badly on FA

IT TOOK the Football Association the better part of yesterday to stop prevaricating and admit there had been wanton vandalism caused by an England player or players aboard the homeward flight from Hong Kong on Tuesday, Cathay Pacific had reported "the worst damage caused by British passengers in 25 years" during the mile high birthday party of Paul Gascoigne.

So now, having admitted the fact, the gentlemen of Lancaster Gate are merely prevaricating until Terry Venables, who is in Switzerland to watch one of England's opponents in the European

championship, can come face to face with the bad boys who caused £5,000 worth of damage to two television sets and a table in the 747 jet.

It makes you proud to be English, does it not? Yet throughout most of yesterday the FA was at pains to refute the airline's account of yobish misbehaviour in the business class cabin reserved for England's footballers. The suggestion was that it was a storm in a champagne glass, and Steve Double, an FA spokesman, repeatedly blamed exaggerated media speculation, though he admitted

Rob Hughes takes issue with the football authorities in their response to an act of vandalism



a last journey before the most important event of their lives. And, given that the birthday boy was 29, surely Cathay Pacific had a right to assume that if these players needed supervision, it was the job of the team management.

In fact, the 27 players were in the upper cabin, along with only Dr John Crane, the team doctor, of the England officials. The other officials, including Venables, were apparently sleeping unawares on a lower deck. "If there had been such raucous behaviour, you would have thought we would have woken up," Double said. "That wasn't the case."

It never is; the FA traditionally sleeps while its reputation burns. Double insisted he had walked through the area where the players had been

sitting and that he saw nothing untoward. The players had been "impeccable" public relations ambassadors for their country on the long haul to China and Hong Kong.

It is Double who is the PR man. Yesterday, he added: "As far as Paul Gascoigne is concerned, we have no evidence to suggest he was involved. He was his usual cheery self, the life and soul of the party, keeping everyone amused. It was normal Paul Gascoigne behaviour." Ah, Gazza. He was the chosen one to address England's youth before the outbound flight and to beseech them not to spoil

Agassi pays heavy price for distractions

FROM DAVID MILLER, IN PARIS

THE French Open tennis championships boiled to life yesterday when Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi, the respective No 1 and No 3 seeds, each were obliged to toil in the sun for five sets in the second round of the men's singles. Sampras ultimately survived with something to spare against Sergi Bruguera, of Spain, but Agassi went down, deservedly, to the unassuming Chris Woodruff, from Tennessee.

Few outside his junior female fan club will regret the passing of Agassi given his present imbalance of attitude: too busy a commercial schedule, too little time for tennis. You cannot go a week without hitting a ball, as he recently did, and expect to pick up your touch at the first swing. He had looked vulnerable in the first round, short of fitness and rhythm, and now he was found out. Woodruff, 23, who

nearly quit the game nine months ago when depressed with his lack of progress, came from two sets to one down to win 4-6, 6-4, 6-7, 6-3, 6-2. Agassi, telling officials that he would drive, as he does each day to avoid the clamouring admirers, from the court to the main stand for his press conference, was not to be seen again. The £2,000 fine is barely a pin prick.

With coy, feigned modesty, Agassi had introduced himself to Woodruff beforehand. "I'm Andre." By the finish, he had discovered, uncomfortably, who Woodruff was. Such was the impact of Woodruff's performance that players who he had previously never spoken to were coming up with congratulations. "I think they are shocked, or happy," he said, enigmatically.

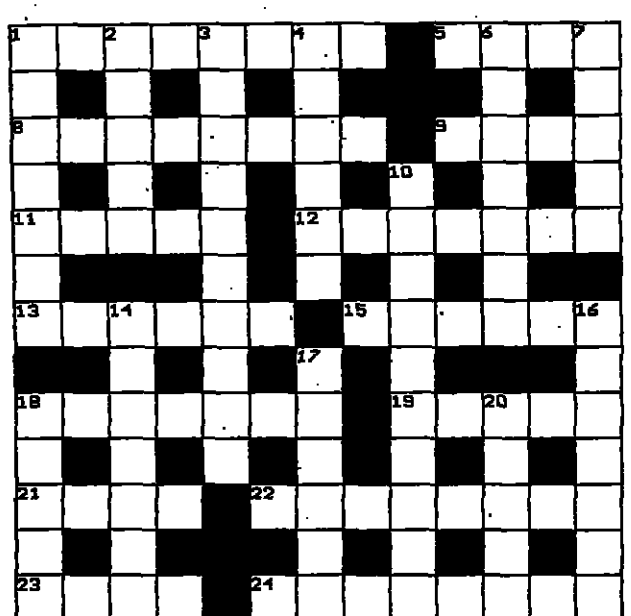
The 1993 National Collegiate Athletic Association singles champion in the United States, who had a record of 45-7, had been literally losing his way in small town satellite tournaments. He reached his first professional tournament this year at Philadelphia as a qualifier, losing to Jim Courier in straight sets. His father, a professor in marketing at the University of Tennessee, his coach and his sports psychologist had persuaded him he should keep going. Before yesterday he had won \$114,000 and is ranked No 72 in the world.

"Before I came on tour I was a bit timid," he said. "I have been through a lot to get here. I am now. If I hadn't continued, I would be back in school or maybe a nomad." It had been a shock, he said, joining the circuit and discovering the cut-throat attitude. He felt Agassi had been too impatient, wanting to hit through him, showing no defensive qualities.

Whether it is points on court or dollars elsewhere, Agassi is in a hurry and, if he should fall from the top flight, no one will mourn on behalf of his vulgar, opportunist equipment sponsors, who send him on court dressed like some Baghdad street trader. This greed — by the same company that has kitted out Mary Pierce in a black cocktail dress and Sampras in Coco the

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 795 in association with BRITISH MIDLAND



- ACROSS
- Weak physical state (8)
 - Pack away (4)
 - Container for leftover food (5,3)
 - Two and a bit pounds (4)
 - Supporting wedge, little nail (5)
 - Significance (7)
 - Expat from country (6)
 - Sweetly ripe genital (6)
 - Laughably inadequate (7)
 - Weighty (5)
 - Style of walking (4)
 - Item in news summary (8)
 - Piece for two players (4)
 - Good fortune personified (4,4)
- DOWN
- Logically inferred (7)
 - Military brass instrument (5)
 - Considerable, trust-worthy (3,5,2)
 - Serious shock, (med.) injury (6)
 - Unimportant (7)
 - Incorrect (5)
 - Fix wedding (4,3,3)
 - Talking no initiative (7)
 - A woodpecker, a painful, stiff condition (7)
 - Spanish currency (6)
 - Unbending (5)
 - Farewell (5)

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Name/Address _____

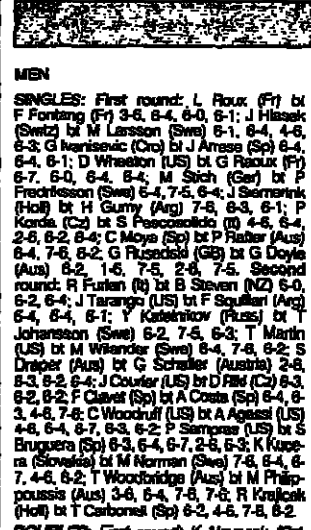
SOLUTION TO NO 794
ACROSS: 1 Practice 5 Rang 9 Oscar 10 Italics 11 Paddock 12 Binge 13 Splendour 14 Usage 20 Normadic 22 Fulsome 23 Canal 24 Tank 25 Ignorant
DOWN: 1 Prompt 2 Accedes 3 Turbo 4 Chicken-and-egg 6 Alien 7 Gasp 8 Gambit 14 Lie low 15 Cadenza 16 Buffer 17 Sculpt 19 Allen 21 Macho



Agassi: toiling



Woodruff raises his arms in triumph after defeating Agassi in the second round of the French Open yesterday



Pierce: toiling

was a vanity mirror by the umpire's chair. She categorically denied afterwards that her off-the-shoulder dress was a distraction, never mind that after almost every point she would smooth the skirt around the hips with her palms.

She was always serene as she took the first set 6-3, but, at 2-3 down in the second, she indulged in the ultimate affectation. At the change of ends, she sat in her chair cross-legged, Cowardesque, as if to say this was all too boring.

Little Randi, keeping her head as the crowd noisily implied, Marie-je to elle, broke serve twice to level the match. Pierce socked the spare ball petulantly into the top of the stand, but thereafter got hold of her game sufficiently to win 6-3, 2-6, 6-2. She had appeared to pretend on court, however, that this nasty little experience had really happen to someone else.

Whether it is points on court or dollars elsewhere, Agassi is in a hurry and, if he should fall from the top flight, no one will mourn on behalf of his vulgar, opportunist equipment sponsors, who send him on court dressed like some Baghdad street trader. This greed — by the same company that has kitted out Mary Pierce in a black cocktail dress and Sampras in Coco the

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Illingworth book claims casualty

BY ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

RAYMOND ILLINGWORTH may yet survive his latest challenge as chairman of the England cricket selectors, but the book that threatens him has already claimed a casualty. Jack Bannister, co-author of the controversial Illingworth book, *One Man Committee*, was yesterday obliged to resign as president of the Professional Cricketers' Association (PCA), the trade union of English players.

Given the weight of disapproval being voiced over the timing and content of the book, Bannister's departure from his honorary position is unsurprising. The PCA executive first questioned him on the issue six weeks ago. "I suggested the officers adopted a wait-and-see policy,"

Bannister said yesterday, "but with Raymond now due to face a disciplinary hearing, I can understand the association wanting to distance itself."

Bannister, whose decision to resign "in the wider interests of the game" was announced in a brief statement by the PCA executive, added that he was "sad that my involvement with the association has come to an end". It is a long and distinguished involvement dating back to the end of his playing career in 1967.

Bannister, now 65, served as treasurer, secretary and chairman before succeeding John Arlott as president.

Bannister has long possessed a talent for versatility. Aside from his role with the PCA, he is a writer and television commentator on the game and a commit-

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Rule of Law, page 44
Golden Embury, page 44